

APPENDIX: Lexicon 7: A Jacob Boehme Dictionary

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LOVING Reader, I had need have an angelical Tongue for this Description, and thou an angelical Mind, and then we should well understand one another: But seeing we have them not, therefore we will express the great Deeds of God with the earthly Tongue.

Abyss/Byss The Abyss is the undifferentiated Infinite, the Everything, the eternal liberty before nature and creature, the non-being which is the condition of being.

The infinite cannot be known until divided in two. Contrariety is the very condition and basis of manifestation. “In yes and no all things consist.”

The first principle of all things, the divine, unlimited, indivisible existence or ultimate unity is, in its desire for self-expression or manifestation, the *Will of the Abyss*. The Will of the Abyss is the Father.

“We understand, that without Nature there is an eternal Stillness and Rest, *viz.* the Nothing; and then we understand that an Eternal Will arises in the Nothing, to introduce the Nothing into Something, that the Will might find, feel and behold itself. For in the Nothing the Will would not be manifest to itself, wherefore we know that the Will seeks itself, and finds itself in itself, and its seeking is a Desire, and its finding is the Essence of the Desire, wherein the Will finds itself.” *The Signature of All Things* 2:8-9

The Nothing wills Something, but has nothing that it is able to make or conceive; so the will conceives itself, draws itself into itself, and comprehends itself, and generates from itself the Ground or Byss.

FATHER – the Will of the Abyss – the first principle of the divine essence.

SON – Byss – the second principle of the divine essence – the Ground.

At the same “moment,” so to speak, as the eternal generation of the Holy Trinity, “the abyssal nothing will introduce itself into something, *viz.* into nature, that is, into properties: and through nature into glory and majesty.”

HOLY SPIRIT – Nature – the third principle of the divine essence.

Thus, from our creaturely point of view, God is born with the cosmos, not before it, since, in our finite perception, there is no “before creation.”

When we speak of “the Birth of God” we speak according to “a creaturely understanding,” for God has no beginning. But “without Nature is the Nothing, which is an Eye of Eternity, an Abyssal Eye, that stands or sees in the Nothing, for it is the Abyss; and this same Eye is a Will, a longing after Manifestation. There is Nothing before the Will, where it might find something. It finds no place to rest, therefore it enters into itself, and finds itself through Nature.” *The Signature of All Things* 3:2

This primal duality Abyss/Byss is manifest on every level and scale of a fractal cosmos; e.g., macrocosmically as eternity/time-space, microcosmically, in human nature, as unconscious/consciousness.

The Duad is the basis of manifestation, so the cosmos is filled with dualities – light/dark, hot/cold, on/off, yes/no, good/evil – but “dualism” is not an adequate framework for understanding the world, which is also filled with ternaries, quaternaries, septenaries – *ad infinitum*.

How did Jacob Boehme know all this? Because he was there. So were we. Deity did not create us out of nothing, but out of itself, in eternity. We were there in the eternal generation of Deity and the birth of the cosmos.

Thus, right at the beginning of Jacob Boehme’s theosophy, we find ourselves on the most audacious course that thought can follow – theogony, the Birth of God.

“And this, my beloved Friend, is the highest Mystery: Therefore if you would find it, seek it not in me, but in yourself, though not in your reason either, which must be as dead, and your desire and will must be in God: And so God shall bring your will into himself, and then you may well see what God is, and what spirit’s child this hand is, and from what kind of spirit it writes.

“But leave off your laborious searching in reason, and enter into the will of God, into God’s spirit, and cast outward reason away, and then your will is God’s will, and God’s spirit will seek you within you. When he moves, go with him, for you have divine power; and whatever you search, you find him in it, and then nothing is hidden from you. Thus you see in his light, and are his.” *Forty Questions of the Soul* 1:57 ff.

See Freher’s Illustrations.

See *The Signature of All Things*, ch. 2

See *Mysterium Magnum* ch. 1 ff.

Nearly all translators use Abyss-Byss. It would be better to use the more familiar and explanatory Unground-Ground, or better yet, retain the German *Ungrund-Grund*.

Adam was a virgin wed to the virgin Sophia. The fall of Adam *preceded*, and was the cause of, his division into Adam and Eve. “The Lord looked on all that he had made and saw that it was *very good*.” But then, “And the Lord said, ‘It is *not good* for the man to be alone.’” Something had changed. Adam had lusted after the tree of knowledge and “imagined into the third principle.” The fall of Adam took place before the deep sleep and the creation of Eve. The heavenly tincture disappeared, the magical birth was spoiled, and virgin Sophia abandoned him. Then the Lord cast the man into a deep sleep and made the woman out of one of his ribs. According to traditional understanding, Adam instructed Eve in the rules of the garden. “Of the tree of life and all the trees of the garden we may eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil we may not eat...” But Eve did not need to hear this. Adam and Eve were one person, now divided, and both remembered the Lord’s words. Adam was not created first; they were both first, but now split in two.

Whether you favor the Adam and Eve story or the evolutionary theory that homo sapiens have bifurcated brains, it is a fact that every human psyche is split. In woman, the masculine principle is in the hiddenness (unconscious); in man the feminine principle is hidden. Now every son of Adam and daughter of Eve is incomplete without a partner. They fulfill in one another what is lost in themselves.

But Jesus said it is best to remain unmarried. (Matthew 19:10-11) Why?

Romance provisionally and partially satisfies our longing for individuation.

In Christ (the Second Adam) we are individuated again, and restored to the virginal unity of the first Adam. This is the meaning of the “alchemical wedding” – the union of the King and Queen (soul and spirit). The regenerated soul in Christ is made whole again and reconciled to Sophia, “the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.” Malachi 2:14

By this transformation Christ, the Last Adam, is formed in us, and Sophia herself places “the garland of Christ” on our heads, because Virgin Sophia is the Bride of Christ. (MM 50:48) But the transformation is on the inward ground only. The outward body remains in “bestial” form. Therefore as long as we remain in the third principle we are *espoused* to Sophia, but not yet united in wedlock. When we shed these mortal cocoons and flutter off to the second principle, we will meet Sophia in her bridal garments.

See *Mysterium Magnum* 50-52; Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:42-58 regarding “the first man and the second man...the first Adam and the last Adam.”

Alchemy the Great Work, Magnum Opus, Philosophic Art, Hermetic Science or simply “the Art.”

In the *hermetic* or *philosophical* alchemy that united esoteric Christianity and natural science, Boehme found a language perfectly suited to his own mystical vision.

The goal of alchemy was the Chemical Wedding, or Bridal Chamber, i.e., the union of soul and spirit (conscious personality and unconscious mind, according to Carl Jung) which were separated in the Fall of Adam. From this union emerges the Christ-child, the Anthropos, the New World Man, the New Creation, the Philosopher, the Magus.

“Two Fishes swim in our Sea,” says the alchemical *Book of Lambspring*, “The Sea is the Body. The two Fishes are Soul and Spirit. Let them be boiled together in their own Sea, then they themselves will become a vast Sea, the vastness of which no man can describe.”

A central alchemical image is of the King (brain) and Queen (heart) dying together and rising as the Hermaphrodite.

“And herein lie both the Tinctures, viz. the Man's and Woman's Tincture, the two Loves, which in the Temperature are *divine*; which were divided in *Adam*, when the Imagination turned itself from the Temperature, and are *united* again in Christ. O ye beloved wise Men understand the Sense of this. For here lies the *Pearl* of the whole World.” *The Election of Grace* 3:47-48

Note the combination of esoteric and evangelical terms in the above passage and in this one from John Ellistone's preface to *The Signature of All Things*:

“Indeed everyone is not fit for or capable of the Knowledge of the Eternal and Temporal Nature in its mysterious Operation, neither is the proud covetous World worthy to receive a clear Manifestation of it; and therefore the only wise God (who giveth Wisdom to everyone that asketh it aright of him) has locked up the Jewel in his blessed Treasury, which none can open but those that have the Key; which is this, viz. *ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: The Father will give the Spirit to them that ask him for it.* (Jesus, Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:13)

“This is the true Theosophic School wherein this Author learned the first Rudiments and Principles of Wisdom, and to which we must go if we would understand his deep Writings: For we must know that the Sons of Hermes, who have commenced in the High School of true Magic and Theosophy, have always spoken their hidden Wisdom in a Mystery; and have so couched it under Shadows and Figures, Parables and Similes, that none can understand their obscure, yet clear Writings, but those who have had Admittance into the same School, and have tasted of the Feast of Pentecost.”

Alchemy was about the union of opposites and its practitioners recognized no barriers between mysticism and science, or between the Christian revelation and the wisdom of “the Jews and Wise Heathens,” or the inner world and the outer world. Knowledge of self, knowledge of God and knowledge of nature were all one knowledge.

“As above, so below; as within, so without; as the universe, so the soul,” said Hermes Trismegistus, the mythical (?) founder of alchemy.

“Courteous Reader, I compare the whole of Philosophy, Astrology, and Theology, together with their mother, to a goodly tree which grows in a fair garden of pleasure.” *Aurora* Preface v. 1

The alchemist expected that the inward alchemical transformation would teach the Artist how to render a physical Philosopher’s Stone, or Alchemical Gold or the Elixir of Life. Alchemical recipes included times, temperatures, substances and quantities, as well as instructions for the inward state of the alchemist – the thoughts, sensations and moral purity that he was to project upon the *materia*.

“Have a vessel made after the manner of a cherub with six wings, which is the figure of God...and pour into the vessel the burning water...make the vessel out of your psychic wholeness.” (Rupescissa)

Most alchemical texts included disclaimers distancing the authors from the “mountebanks and gold-bakers” who sought the Philosopher’s Stone for the sake of earthly gain. Nature would only yield the earthly Stone to one in whom had been born the heavenly Stone.

Whatever was meant by the “earthly Stone,” it was something that even Jacob Boehme stood before with fear and trembling.

“Also concerning the philosophical work of the *tincture*, its progress is not so bluntly and plainly to be described; albeit I have it not in the praxis, the seal of God lieth before it to *conceal* the true *ground* of the same upon pain of eternal punishment, unless a man knew for certain that it might not be misused; there is also no power to attain unto it, unless a man first become that himself which he seeketh therein; no skill or art availeth, unless one give the tincture into the hands of another, he cannot prepare it unless he be certainly in the new birth.” Epistle 23:15

“I see it well enough, but I have *no manual operation*, instigation or art unto it; but I only set forth an open mystery, whereunto God shall stir up labourers of His own; let no man seek the work from me, or think to get the knowledge and operation of the philosopher's stone, or universal tincture from me, and though it is known clearly, and might be opened more clearly, yet I have yielded my will, and will write nothing, but as it is given to me, that so it may not be my work, lest I should be *imprisoned in the Turba*.” Epistle 3:33

“Do not take me for an alchymist, for I write only in the knowledge of the spirit, and not from experience. Though indeed I could here shew something else, viz. in how many days, and in what hours, these things must be prepared; for gold cannot be made in one day, but a whole month is requisite for it.

“But it is not my purpose to make any trial at all of it, because I know not how to manage the fire; neither do I know the colours or tinctures of the qualifying or fountain spirits in their

outermost birth or geniture, which are two great defects; but I know them according to the regenerate man, which stands not in the palpability." *Aurora* 22:104-105

The Incarnation of Christ is an alchemical work.

The only book recommendation in all of JB's writings is the alchemical text *The Waterstone of the Wise* (*Sophic Hydrolith*). "Concealed in [the Philosopher's Stone] are the spirit of the Quintessence of all things beneath the disc of the moon; on this account they say that it upholds the sky, and moves the sea...Therefore Hermes and Aristotle call it the true, undeceiving, and unfailing arcanum of all arcana, the Divine Virtue which is hidden from the foolish...For by its aid Noah built the Ark, Moses the Tabernacle with all its golden vessels, and Solomon the Temple, besides accomplishing many other great deeds... The Stone enabled them to discern the great mysteries of the Divine wonders, and the inexhaustible riches of the Divine Glory." *Waterstone* p. 86

Anguish the third of the [seven properties](#), denoting strife, whirling, heat

Antichrist the spirit of self-pride worshipped as god in the "stone churches." Also "Babel" and "the Great Whore." Revelation ch. 17

"If I should describe Antichrist, I could not demonstrate him otherwise, than that he calleth himself a Christian, and covers himself with Christ's Purple-Mantle; & acknowledgeth and teacheth Christ with the Mouth; but his Heart is altogether set against Christ, he teacheth one thing and doth another; outwardly, he calleth himself a Christian, and inwardly he is a Serpent; he persecuteth Christ in his Members, and resisteth the Spirit of Christ; he flattereth and playeth the Hypocrite, and will be honoured in Christ's Name, but is inwardly a devouring Wolf; as Christ calleth the Pharisees, who sat upon Moses' Seat, and managed the Law, [Matt. 7:15]; But Christ said, they were from beneath, from the Father of the World, viz. from the Devil, John 8:23, 24." Response to Richter 72

The primal error of big church theology is the notion that God is heterogenous to his creation and distant from us.

"Antichrist is he who proclaims God is outside this world that he may reign as god in this world."

"Why will you let the Antichrist befool you with his laws and his talk? Why will you seek for God in the depths above the stars? You will not find Him there. Seek Him within your own heart, in His own dwelling; in the generation of your own life." *Three Principles* 4:8

"Our doctors (of divinity) know that there is a God who created everything; but they do not know where or what this God is. When they write about God, they seek Him outside of this world in some separate heaven, as if he were a form which could be compared with something.

They say that God rules everything in the world by one spirit; but they place his corporeal propriety many thousand miles away into some heaven.” Aurora 22:35

JB paints a chilling picture of the “stone churches,” where, with “sermons and singing and repetitions” they “set the Garland of Sophia on the Head of the Serpent;” but, surprisingly, does not lay down the Revelation 18:4 imperative, proclaimed by many chiliasts of his day, that the believer must “come out of” the institutional church. The Christian, he said, may participate in any sect, or none. “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure.” (Titus 1:15) Boehme saw many dissenters who left the institutional church only to bring the spirit of antichrist along with them – self-opinionation, creedal authority, imperial leadership and organizational dominion.

See Epistle 10, “Of the Killing of Antichrist in Ourselves.”

“Abel is the fundamental church representing God. The church of Cain is to be converted through Abel. Therefore God has not rejected the church of Cain in so far as not to be willing to receive any member thereof; but the true church is like a lamb among the wolves on account of the wolfish natures of the members usually composing that church.” *Three Principles* 20:89

Boehme was a practicing Lutheran and believed in pedobaptism and certain magical properties of the Lord’s Supper. See *The Testaments of Christ*

Astrology In Boehme’s system, the seven planets are signifiers of the seven properties of nature.

1. Saturn *attraction/stillness*
2. Jupiter *resistance/motion*
3. Mars *strife/whirling*
4. Sol *sunburst/transformation*
5. Venus *light/love*
6. Mercury *sound*
7. Luna *body*

Boehme did not practice divination or horoscope readings, but affirmed that the “natural man” is, in fact, “under the instigation, government and dominion of the stars.” See Spiritu Mundi

Galileo, Kepler and Boehme were contemporaries in the age when the separation of astronomy from astrology began. Boehme himself made the distinction, saying that, as “Mathematical Science,” astrology had “Rectitude, Truth, and Foundation in the Mystery of Nature,” but beyond that was “mere heathenish, adventitious Excrescencies, a Stupidity and Blindness of Heathens, with which we Christians ought to have nothing to do.” (Okeley)

Boehme acknowledged that he knew nothing of “Mathematical Science,” but accepted Copernicus’ heliocentric solar system and contended that Saturn was farther from the sun than Jupiter at a time when that too was still under dispute; not as a result of observation or calculation, but in accordance with his inner visions: “Sol is the center” (the fourth and central one of the Seven Properties) and Saturn (the first property) is remotest from consciousness, while Luna (Moon, the seventh property) is nearest.

But that I now write, that the Stars rule in all Beasts, and other Creatures; and that every Creature received the Spirit of the Stars in the Creation, and that all Things still stand in the same Regimen; this the Simple will hardly believe, though the Doctor knows it well, and therefore we direct them to Experience. Behold, a Male and Female beget young Ones, and that often; now they come forth out of one only Body, and yet are not of one Kind, [nor of the same] Colour and Virtue, nor [shape or] Form of Body. All this is caused by the Alteration of the Stars; for when the Seed is sown, the Carver makes an image according to his Pleasure; yet according to the first Essence, he cannot alter that; but he gives the Spirit in the Essence to it according to his Power, [or Ability or Dominion,] as also Manners, and Senses, Colour and Gesture like himself, to be as he is, and as the Constellation is in its Essence at that Time, (when the [Creature] draws Breath) [first in its Mother’s body,] whether [the Essence] be in Evil or in Good, [inclined] to Biting, Worrying and Striking, or to Meekness, [or loving Kindness and Gentleness;] all as the Heaven is at that Time, so will also the Spirit and the Beast be. *Three Principles* 8:45

Babel the warring theologies of the churchmen, the religion of opinions. “It is the greatest Folly that is in Babel, for People to strive about Religion, as the Devil hath made the World to do; so that they contend vehemently about Opinions of their own Forging, viz., about the Letter; when the Kingdom of God consists in no Opinion, but in Power and Love.” *Way to Christ*, The New Creation, ch. 7

“A historical belief is merely an opinion based upon some adopted explanation of the letter of the written word, having been learned in schools, heard by the external ear, and which produces dogmatists, sophists, and opinionated servants of the letter. But Faith is the result of the direct perception of the truth, heard and understood by the inner sense, taught by the Holy Ghost, and productive of theosophists and servants of the divine Spirit.” (Hartmann, ch. 1)

Bible the Book of God, but rightly understood only in “a magical or cabalistical sense,” inscrutable to “outward reason.”

“When I found the pearl, then I looked Moses in the face, and found that Moses had written very right, but I had not rightly understood it.” *Three Principles* 10:2

A literal, historical reading of the Old Testament is the “veil of Moses.”

“But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.... But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:14-18

“Literal” means “to the letter” or “by the letter.”

“God made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” 2 Corinthians 3:4-6

So much concerning biblical literalism.

(And did the Apostle just say that we behold the glory of the Lord *in a mirror*?)

Boehme advised eschatologist Paul Kaym to stop wracking his brains over the Bible. “Searching only doth nothing; the Philosopher’s Stone is a very dark disesteemed stone, of a gray colour, but therein liest the highest Tincture; would you search out the Mysterium Magnum, then take before you only the earth with its metals, and so you may well find what the magical or cabalistical ground is.” Epistle 4:111

Boehme rejected the notion that only creedal Christians could be saved and that the way to God could only be found in the Bible. The Turks and Heathens who had not the *Book of God* had the *Book of Nature* and the *Book of Man* to read.

“Most certainly there is but one God; but when the veil is put away from thy eyes, so that thou seest and knowest him, then thou wilt also see and know all thy brethren, whether they be Christians, Jews, Turks, or Heathen.” *Aurora* 11:58



In an amazing passage from *The Life and Doctrine of Jacob Boehme*, Franz Hartmann describes how the mystic's holistic view of the cosmos is also a biblical hermeneutic.

The writings of Jacob Boehme are all in accordance with the statements contained in the Christian Bible, and this circumstance will at once prove to be an obstacle in the way of those who have no understanding for the internal meaning of the Bible accounts, and may frighten them away from giving any attention to his works.

The Bible, which, in an external sense, was formerly credulously believed and accepted by the pious and ignorant, is now universally disbelieved and laughed at by the "enlightened" portions of rationalistic humanity; and very naturally so, because the rationalistic specimens of mankind are not enlightened enough to see the delicious fruit within the indigestible shell; they do not know that behind these tales, full of absurdity, there is hidden more wisdom than in all the philosophical books of the world. They know nothing about the inner life, the Soul-life of this world, and that the personalities, which are as dramatic actors introduced to us in the Bible, represent actual living and conscious powers, which may or may not have become objectified and represented in terrestrial forms on the terrestrial plane. If, departing from the

pseudoscientific standpoint, which regards the world as being made up of a conglomeration of self-existent, individual entities, we look at the world, and especially at our solar system, as being unity, indivisible in its essential nature, but manifesting itself in a multitude of appearances and forms of life, the history of the Bible will cease to appear to us as the history of persons that lived in olden times, and whose lives and adventures can have no serious interest for us at the present time; but the history of the evolution as contained in the Bible will be understood to mean the history of the evolution of Man—i.e., Adam, the king of the earth, whose body is as great as our solar system; the history of the universal Man, in whom we all exist; who has become material and degraded; but was again redeemed and spiritualized by the awakening within him of the immortal life and light of the Christ.

Byss see Abyss

Birth of God or Theogony. See Abyss. Boehme's theogony is not speculative philosophy. He believed that a cosmological grounding was needed for a full understanding of the birth of God within us. The birth of God is described in the seven properties.

Nicolescu: "Boehme's sevenfold structure penetrates all levels of reality. The birth of God is repeated endlessly throughout all these levels, in 'signatures' or 'traces.'

"He writes: 'The seven spirits of God, in the circumference and space, contain or comprehend heaven and this world; also the wide breadth and depth without and beyond the heavens, even above and beneath the world, and in the world. They contain also all the creatures both in heaven and in this world.... Out of and from the same body of the seven spirits of God are all things made and produced, all angels, all devils, the heaven, the earth, the stars, the elements, men, beasts, fowls, fishes; all worms, wood, trees, also stones, herbs and grass, and all whatsoever is.' [Aurora 9:74-77]

"Nature finds its place in this dazzling dynamic – the receptacle of the birth of God." *Science, Meaning and Evolution: The Cosmology of Jacob Boehme*.

Cabala Jewish mysticism centering on the inner meaning and powers of words, based on Torah, symbolized by the Tree of Life and expounded in the 22 volumes of the Zohar (*Radiance*).

After his first book, *Aurora*, Boehme was introduced to Cabala by learned friends, and its influence on him was profound. Boehme's Ungrund is the Ein Sof of the Tree of Life and his androgynous Adam, "the heavenly image," is Adam Kadmon of the Midrash. He also adopts the rabbinic doctrine that the fall of man took place *before* the "deep sleep" and the creation of Eve; and that Adam fell 40 days after he was created. (*Threefold Life of Man* ch. 7) The sunburst in the fourth property is akin to *Shevirat haKeilim*, the Shattering of the Vessels. He references the Cabalistic *Fourth Book of Esdras* (Ezra) in *Mysterium Magnum* vol. 2, and *Of the End Times* part 1 (Epistle 4:35). *Mysterium Magnum*, a vast commentary on Genesis, follows the style and interpretive method of the Rabbis: "The inward figure stands thus:" "The outward figure is thus explained..."



These elements are not found in *Aurora*. At the time he wrote *Aurora*, he would have had a second-hand knowledge of Cabala through his reading of Paracelsus. In the silent years between *Aurora* (1612) and *The Three Principles* (1619), educated men journeyed to Gorlitz to meet the "Philosophical Cobbler," and through them he was introduced to the ancient rabbinic writings. As a result, says Boehme, "I obtained a better style in writing, and also a deeper and more grounded knowledge, and could better bring everything into the outward expression."

The above emblem was designed by Boehme and appears in *The Remainder of Writings by Jacob Behmen*, Answer to Stiefel 2:54

See Tetragrammaton

Centrum Naturae, the first beginning to nature. See the Wheel of Nature.

Christ the inward new Man in the Spirit of Christ.

"The Man Christ (man having become Christ by Christ becoming man) is Lord over all, and comprehends within Himself the whole of divine existence. There is then no other place where we can recognize God except within the substance of Christ in us, because in Him resides substantially the fullness of Divinity," (*Forty Questions*, 1:153.)

"All that God the Father is, and all that is in Him, will then appear within me (in man) as a form, an image of the essence of the divine world. All colors, powers, and virtues of His eternal wisdom will be manifest in me as His true image. I shall myself be the manifestation of the

spiritual divine world and an instrument for the Spirit of God, wherein He plays with Himself. I shall be His stringed instrument and celestial harp, and not only I, but all my fellow-members in the gloriously constructed stringed instrument of God." *Signature* ch. 12

A merely historical Christ is "the golden calf of the stone-churches in Babel."

See Incarnation.

Divine Unity is Deity before manifestation; like a candle that produces Fire (Father), Light (Son) and Air (Spirit). "God before Nature and Creature."

Election Predestination, foreordination, determinism, the Pauline doctrine that the redeemed were chosen for salvation before the creation.

"He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons." Ephesians 1:4-5

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10

Boehme contested the surface interpretation of scriptures like Romans ch. 9, which indicate that those not elected for everlasting life are foreordained to an inescapable damnation.

To Paul, Election was a personal experience, as Jesus halted him on the road to Damascus, saying, "He is my chosen vessel." (Acts 9)

In early Protestant theology, Election was a divine lottery before the beginning of time in which God selected some for heaven and some for damnation. The vast majority of humans were foreordained to eternal torment in hell, and were created for that purpose, so that God could magnify the glory of his justice and show forth the majesty of his righteousness at their expense.

"I believe it because it's absurd!" said Luther.

The absurdity arises from the perennial error that the Creator is separate from the creation.

1. WHEN Reason hears anything said concerning God intimating what he is according to his Being, Essence, Substance and Will, it imagines that God were some strange thing afar off, dwelling without and beyond the Place of this World, aloft above the Stars, and governing only by his Spirit with an omnipotent Power in the Place of this World.

2. But it supposes that his Majesty in Trinity, wherein God is especially manifest, dwells in Heaven, without and beyond the Place of this World.

3. And thereupon Reason falls into a creaturely Opinion, as if God were some strange thing, and that he did before the Time of the Creation of the Creatures and of this World hold a Consultation in himself in his Trinity, by his Wisdom, to contrive what he would make, and to what End everything should serve, and so has framed a predestinate Purpose in himself, what he would ordain everything to be.

4. Whence the contentious Opinion is risen, of God's Determination concerning Man, as if God had in his Purpose or Predestination chosen one Part of Men for Heaven, to be in his holy Habitation, and appointed the other Part to eternal Damnation, in whom he will manifest his Wrath; and that contrariwise in the other which are his chosen and elect he will manifest his Grace.

5. And so it is thought he has in his Predestination made a Separation, that he might show his Power both in Love and Anger: And therefore everything must of Necessity be as it is.

6. That Part ordained to Wrath it is conceived are so reprobated and hardened by God's Purpose and Predestination, that there is no Possibility left for them to attain the Salvation of God, and on the contrary in the other there is no Possibility of Damnation.

7. And though the Holy Scripture speaks almost the very same Words, to which creaturely Reason assents, which understands not at all what God is; yet Scripture, on the other Side, speaks much more to the contrary, that God wills not Evil, nor has purposely by way of Predestination made any thing that is evil. (Preface, *The Election of Grace*)

2:10. But he himself is only O N E, and the *Ground* of all Things, and the *Eye* of every Being, and the *Cause* of every Essence; out of his Property Nature and Creature [Virtue, Power or Faculty] exist.

11. For what should he then consult with himself if there be *no Enemy* before or behind him; and he himself alone is *All*, even the Will, the Possibility, and the Ability?

12. Therefore when we will speak of God's *unchangeable* Being solely and alone; 1. What he wills, 2. What he would have come to pass, and 3. What he always wills, we must *not* speak of his *Consultation*, for there is no Consultation in him.

13. He is the Eye of total Visibility, and the Ground of every Existence; he always wills and does in himself but *one thing*, viz. generates himself, in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the Wisdom of his Manifestation; besides this, the One only Abyssal God in himself wills *nothing*.

“The Spirit of God works in love and wrath; for he is the spirit of every life, and assimilates himself to every life. He is in everything as the thing's will and property is. What the soul wills,

that he wills also, and thereinto the soul enters. It is all magical; what the will of a thing wills, that it receives.” *Six Theosophical Points* 5:8:29-30 (see Magia)

William Law: “There is no Wrath that stands between God and us, but what is awakened in the dark Fire of our own fallen Nature; and to quench this Wrath, and not his own, God gave his only begotten Son to be made Man. God has no more Wrath in himself now, than he had before the Creation, when he had only himself to love. The precious Blood of his Son was not poured out to pacify himself (who in himself had no Nature towards man but Love), but it was poured out, to quench the Wrath, and Fire of the fallen Soul, and kindle in it a Birth of Light, and Love.” *Spirit of Love* 2:50

See Turba

“The Lord is not willing that any should perish.” 2 Peter 3:9

See Will

Element The four elements are united in the one or holy Element. The four elements are not substances but states – solid, liquid, gas, plasma. The one holy element is of or according to the second Principle generated eternally out of the eternal Nature or great Mystery, which are according to the First, but wherever they generate the holy Element there is paradise. In the sunburst of the fourth property, the four are united, their divisibility put into the hiddenness, and become again one holy Element.

Ens is the peculiar Being or Essence of a thing, particularly in terms of moral orientation. In Deity the Ens is “The holy Power of Light and Love,” as opposed to “the ens of the Serpent.” The ens is the desire of a property and out of the same ens in the formed nature the Word becomes a creatural life.

The ens that we carry within us tinctures our speech and gives tone to the voice. Not words, but the tones in which they are spoken, strike our hearers’ inner bell. When an enraged person confronts us we involuntarily feel anger boiling up inside ourselves – that is the stirring of the fiery wrathful ens. When words of love set our hearts aglow, that is the holy love ens stirring. Words of love sound hollow if they are not tinctured with the love-ens. Speaking words of hate in a soft, sibilant voice cannot conceal the angry fire-ens. A banal statement sounds powerful if spoken with emphatic emotion or conviction. The power of speech is not in the words so much as the ens, “as we see that an Evil Man is often moved by a good Man to repent of, and cease from his Iniquity, when the good Man touches and strikes his hidden Instrument with his meek and loving Spirit. And thus also it happens to the good Man, that when the wicked Man strikes his hidden Instrument with the Spirit of his Wrath, that then the Form of Anger is stirred up also in the good Man, and the one is set against the other.” *Signature* 1:8-9

Like so many of Boehme's seemingly arcane and alien words, ens signifies something that we know very well in daily experience.

Mysterium Magnum 21:14 For every word of man proceeds from an eternal ens; either from the ens of God's love, or from the ens of God's anger; and if now it be brought forth out of the ens, viz. out of its own place or mother, it will have again a place of its rest, wherein it may work.

15. Now if it cannot take rest and work in its likeness, outside the wicked man, (who has awakened and brought it forth out of his ens, and introduced it into a sound, or wordy substance), then it catches or surrounds its expressor [or author] who has brought it into a substance, and enters again with its root into its mother whence it did arise; that is, with the enkindled spirit, and with the substance (of its contrived matter) it does lay hold of and apprehend the inventor's [expressor's] body; viz. the outward essence of the outward sulphur.

16. For every word, when it is expressed, is outwardly made and formed; for in the expressing or pronouncing thereof the outward spirit, viz. the outward part of the soul, receives it to its own substance; and afterwards, being enkindled in the wrath, and infected by the devil in its coming forth, in its witty glancing subtlety of the Serpent, does enter again into the soul and body of the monstrous image; and works according to its property, enkindled and infected by the devil, and continually brings forth such evil fruits and words: as we plainly see that out of many a wicked mouth nothing but vanity proceeds.

"The kingdom of God is not in word but in power (ens)." (1 Cor. 4:20)

Essence Being or Substance.

For an exposition of "Science and Essence" see the last passage of *Clavis* (210-219)

Essence (being) is the cause of science (knowing), "as when the understanding manifests itself in the mind, there must first be a cause which must *give* or *bring forth* the mind."

Knowing is a phenomenon of being. The converse is true. There could be no essence without science, no being without knowledge or consciousness of being. "Science is the root of all beginnings."

"The Science is the cause that the divine abyssal will compacts and impresses itself into nature, to the separable, intelligible, and perceivable life of understanding and difference; for from the impressure of the Science, whereby the will attracts it into itself the natural life arises, and the word of every life originally."

See Science

Eternal Nature is God in the first principle, according to which he is not called God, but “a dark consuming fire.” Only in the love-light of the second principle is God called God. See The Three Principles

“But there is yet this difference [to be observed,] that Evil neither is, nor is called God; this is understood in the first Principle, where it is the earnest Fountain of the Wrathfulness, according to which, God calls himself an angry, wrathful, zealous God. For the original of Life, and of all Mobility, consists in the Wrathfulness; yet if the tartness be kindled with the Light of God, it is then no more Tartness, but the severe Wrathfulness is changed into great Joy.” *Three Principles* 1:2

The eternal nature in the first principle is LAW. God in the second principle is FREEDOM.

The laws of nature are impersonal, indifferent, inviolable and never subject to modification. Nature has no intentions and takes no account of our good intentions; has no motives and grants no exemptions for good motives. To French Idealists who wrote of “living in harmony with nature,” a German Cynic replied, “How does one live in harmony with indifference?”

The children of Israel found it impossible to live in harmony with God revealed according to the first principle – God of the stony LAW.

Christians have always had difficulty explaining Jehovah God of the Old Testament.

In 1 Samuel 15, for example, Jehovah strips Saul of the kingship, not because he massacred “man and woman, infant and nursing child,” but because he failed to massacre the livestock as well. In chapter 27 we find David, “a man after Jehovah’s own heart,” travelling through Philistia, murdering and robbing everyone he meets, leaving no one alive “lest they inform on us.”

“Thine eye shall not pity!”

“Thou shalt not spare!”

Jehovah has been variously explained as the demiurge, the blind god (Samael), or Satan, or a nature spirit who lived in a volcano (Exodus 19:16), or as a god of reason and science “who in Sinai’s awful cave, to man the wondrous art of writing gave.”

But Jacob Boehme has an explanation that is both simple and satisfactory: the angry, jealous Jehovah of the Old Testament is God manifested in the first principle. As history, God’s self-revelation can be seen as progressive, or incremental. He was first revealed to Moses as the dark fire of the first principle, which in an unfallen world would have remained in an unknowable hiddenness. In the prophets, the morning light of the second principle begins to appear, in fleeting glimpses, between clouds of wrathful words and fiery judgments, *Vide* Isaiah

and Jeremiah. The noonday sun of the second principle arrived in the person of Jesus Christ. On Pentecost came the advent of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2)

This doctrine is in perfect accordance with that of Paul, who explains in Romans 3,6 and 7; 2 Corinthians 3; Galatians 3 and the Book of Hebrews how the Law of Moses was an essential phase in God's plan of redemption, but that the Law has now been "done away in Christ."

Still "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against the unrighteousness of men." Romans 1

King David, who had encountered God in both wrath and mercy, said, "With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful; With a blameless man You will show Yourself blameless; With the pure You will show Yourself pure; And with the devious You will show Yourself shrewd." 2 Samuel 22:26-27

Law was a necessary phase in the development of humanity because by it we became conscious. It was the first commandment, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat," that awakened Adam to self-consciousness. Each time he walked past the tree of knowledge he thought, "I will not eat the forbidden fruit because God has commanded me not to – but I could..." Without this either-or, this dichotomy of choice, Adam never would have become conscious of "I."

Why did the Being of All Beings lead us this way? The constituted "I" is a seed. The fall of Adam (*felix culpa!*) awakened consciousness, and now "the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life (Gk. *psyche*) will lose it, and he who hates his life (*psyche*) in this world will keep it for eternal life (*zoa*)...Follow me..." John 12:23-26

See [The Three Principles](#)

Expressed word or outflowed word. All Creatures visible and invisible. "The visible world with its hosts and creatures is nothing but the outflowed word which hath introduced itself into properties, where in the properties an own self-will is existed. And with the receptibility of the willing is the creaturely life existed." *Theoscopium* 3:22-23

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen. Hebrews 11:1

1. CHRIST says: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you* (Matt. vi. 33).

My Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him (Luke xi. 13);

...and when he (the Holy Spirit) is come, he will guide you into all truth; he will put you in mind of all that I have told you of; for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you (John xvi. 13-15).

I will give you a mouth and wisdom what ye should speak (Luke xxi. 15).

And St. Paul says: We know not what we should pray and speak; but the Spirit of God intercedes powerfully for us, according to the pleasure of God (Rom. viii. 26).

2. Now, faith is not an historical knowledge, that a man should frame “Articles of Faith” and force his mind into the works of his reason; but faith is one Spirit with God, for the Holy Spirit moves in the spirit of faith.

3. True faith is a power of God, one Spirit with God. It works in and with God. It is free and bound to no article, save only to true love, in which it gathers the power and strength of its life; human delusion and conjecture are of no consequence.

4. For as God is free from all inclination, in such a sense that he does whatever he wills, and needs to give no account about it: so also is the true right faith free in the Spirit of God. It has no more than one inclination, viz. to the love and mercy of God, so that it casts its will into God's will and goes out from the sidereal and elemental Reason; it seeks not itself in carnal Reason, but in God's love. And when in this way it finds itself, it finds itself in God, and works with God; not in acting according to Reason, whatever the latter will have, but in God, whatever God's Spirit will have. For it regards the earthly life as nothing, in order that it may live in God, and that God's Spirit in it may be the will and the doing. It gives itself up in humility to the will of God, and sinks down through reason into death, but springs up with God's Spirit in the life of God. It is as if it were a nothing, and yet in God is all; it is an ornament and crown of the Deity, a wonder in the divine magia. It makes where there is nothing, and takes where nothing is made. It is operative, and no one sees its being; it uplifts itself, and yet needs no elevation. It is mighty, and yet is the lowliest humility. It possesses all, and yet embraces nothing more than gentleness. It is thus free from all iniquity and has no law, for the fierce wrath of nature has no influence upon it. It exists in eternity, for it is comprehended in no ground; it is impent in nothing, just as the unground of eternity is free and rests in nothing save in itself only, where there is an eternal gentleness [tranquility].

5. So is it also with the right true faith in the unground. It is in itself essential being. It has life, and yet seeks not its life, but it seeks the life of the eternal calm tranquility. It goes out from the spirit of its life, and possesses itself: it is thus free from pain (Qual) as God is free from pain, and dwells thus in eternal freedom in God. It is with regard to the eternal freedom of God as a nothing, and yet is in everything. All that God and eternity is and is able to do serves it in some stead. It is laid hold of by nothing, and yet is a fair indwelling in the great might of God. It is a being, and yet is grasped by no being. It is a playmate and friend of the divine Virgin which is

the wisdom of God; in it lie the great wonders of God. It is free from all things, just as light is free from fire, and though it is always generated by fire, yet the torment of fire cannot seize or reach it.

6. So in like manner we give you to understand that faith is begotten out of the spirit of life, as out of an ever-burning fire, and shines in that fire; it fills the fire of life and yet is never laid hold of. But if it be laid hold of, then itself has entered into reason as into a prison, and is no longer in God, in his freedom, but has entered into torment; it torments itself, though assuredly it may become free. In reason it works wonders in the fire of nature, and in freedom it works the wonders of God in love.

The Incarnation of Christ 3:1

Fiat/Verbum Fiat the Eternal speaking Word or Creating Power proceeding from the Freewill of the Abyss. "Let there be..." Also the desire of the Soul taking the Power of the holy Love Tincture, and making it essential.

Flagrat or salnitral flagrat, from the Latin *flagro*, is the fire-flash or sunburst of the Fourth Property.

The fourth property is Sol, at the center of the seven properties, the sunburst that kindles the dark triad into the light triad. The dark triad (1-2-3) is in the first principle, the fiery wrath. The light triad (5-6-7) is in the second principle, the light of God. The fourth property is the third principle, the outward material world. It is here that the soul stands between light and darkness. "[The Flagrat] is, as I may term it, the magical Fire-breath, whereby the Powers either of Light or Darkness are dismayed. In short, it is the pregnant Echo of the Sound of Eternity everywhere speaking, working, and opening itself in Love or Anger, in each Thing according to its Will and Desire: In some it is the horrible Flagrat to Death; and in others it is the pleasant triumphant Flagrat to Life." (John Ellistone)

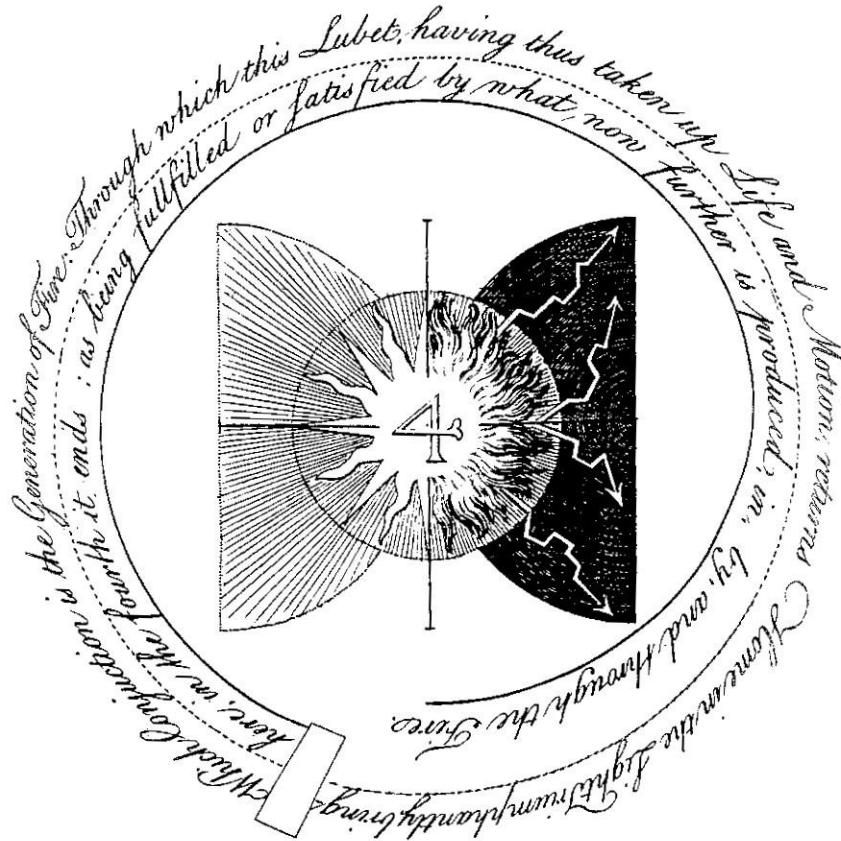


Diagram 3 from An Illustration of the Deep Principles of Jacob Behmen by Dionysius Freher.

Freher's notation:

"FIGURE THREE

The Fourth Property of the Eternal Nature.

The Magic Fire. The Fire World.

The Third Principle.

The Generation of the Cross.

The Strength, Might and Power of Eternal Nature.

The Abyss's or Eternal Liberty's Opening in the Dark World, breaking and consuming all the strong Attraction of Darkness.

"The Distinguishing Mark, standing in the Midst between three and three, looking with the first terrible Crack (made in the first, gross and rough hardness) into the Dark World; and with the second joyful Crack (made in the second, soft, watery or conquered Harshness) into the Light World; and giving unto each what it is capable of, viz., Might, Strength, Terror, etc. unto the former, but Light, Splendour, Luster and Glory, unto the latter."

Ellistone, the 17th century translator, explains, “The Word in the German is *Schra'ck*, which signifies properly a Fright, sudden Astonishment, Dismay, Terror, or Crack, but I have put it Flagrat, from the Latin Word *Flagro*, though I mean not by it only a Burning, but even the powerful Opening of the Life or Death of the Enkindling of the Fire in Nature. For the Fire is the dividing Bound-mark, in which the Life of both Principles is opened and separated; the Life of the first is the dying Death in the Darkness, and the Life of the second is the living Life in the Light. You may perceive a resemblance of this Flagrat in Thunder and Lightning, as also in Gunpowder, and the like. Take for instance divers sulphureous salnitral Minerals exactly mixed, now their Powers are as I may say contracted, or shut up in the astringent dark Desire or Death; but touch them rightly with the true Fire, and you will see how they will soon open, disclose, and flash forth, and will even display and stream themselves forth into divers Properties, Colours, and Virtues. It is even the bursting forth of the ardent Desire in Nature.”

In this volume I have sometimes substituted “sunburst” for the rather droll “flagrat” and “fire-flash,” but have not made that change in the published editions of *Signature* and *Mysterium Magnum* because Ellistone is following Boehme’s preference for abstract symbols over visual imagery.

In cosmology the flagrat is the Big Bang, in human experience, the crisis of spiritual transformation.

See Salitter

Form see Property and Seven Properties

Four Elements earth, water, air and fire. The elements are not substances but states – solid, liquid, gas, plasma – or in Boehmean terms, “properties” (forms). The first four of the seven properties are the four elements - 1. Earth (Sal) 2. Water (Mercury) 3. Air (Sulphur) 4. Fire (Salniter) 5. Light (tred Sulphur - air) 6. Sound (tinctured Mercury - water) 7. Body (tinctured Sal - body)

“From the sun and stars proceed the four elements, fire, air, water and earth... Here you must lift up your eyes beyond nature, into the light-holy triumphing divine power, into the unchangeable Holy Trinity, which is a triumphing, springing, moveable being, and all powers are therein, as in nature. For this is the eternal mother of nature, of which heaven, earth, stars, elements, angels, devils, men, beasts, and all have their being; and therein ALL stands. When we nominate heaven and earth, stars and elements, and all that is therein, and all whatsoever is above the heaven, then thereby is nominated the total God, who has made himself creaturely in these abovementioned beings, in his power which goeth forth from him. But GOD in his TRINITY is unchangeable, and whatever there is in heaven and upon earth and above the earth, has its spring, source and original from the power which proceedeth from God.” *Aurora* 2:59-62

Holy Spirit the body or outward manifestation of Deity. God as revealed in the third principle. “I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.” (Joel 2)

God the Father is fire; God the Son is light; God the Holy Spirit is the Event of the light of God shining on creation.

God the Father is Ocean; God the Son is Wave; God the Holy Spirit is the Wave breaking on the shore.

God the Father is thought; God the Son is word; God the Holy Spirit is action.

The Holy Spirit is the love that flows “between” the Father and the Son, but since this “between” is infinite and its center is everywhere, we experience the Holy Spirit as the outgoing radiance of the universal love of God.

The love that flows between created beings is likewise God the Holy Spirit. “God is love, and whoever abides in love abide in God, and God in them.” 1 John 4:16

Many religious persons would be surprised to learn that their religion is of little interest to the Holy Spirit. “No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and his love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him, and he in us, because he has given us his Spirit.” 1 John 4:12-13

There is a growing movement to identify the Holy Spirit as the feminine aspect of the Godhead. Boehme conceives of no such Father-Mother-Son Trinity but identifies virgin Sophia with the second principle of the Son. “Christ and the virgin Sophia are one person,” he says (MM 50:48), in the sense that “a man shall cleave to his wife and the two shall be one flesh.” For Sophia is the Bride of Christ. Boehme’s Adam is not male but androgynous. Adam and Eve were one person, but then split in two. See Sophia. Granted that identifying the principle of the SON with the female aspect of deity adds to the linguistic difficulties already facing feminine hypostasis theology, but at least the interpreter of Jacob Boehme is not stuck with a male God creating a male and then adding woman as the enclitic of the man.

Imagination is the first phase of creation. Nothing is built without being imagined first. This mundane truism is a cosmological principle. “Every imagination maketh substantiality” — *Threefold Life* 10:31

“Where there is no substance there is no creating; whereas yet a creaturely spirit is no palpable substance, but it must draw a substance into itself through its imagination, else it would not subsist” — *Incarnation* 1:5:88

“A spirit out of nature is a magic fire source, and is desirous of substance, the desire maketh substance and bringeth that substance into its imagination, that is the magic fire's corporeity, whence the spirit is called a creature.” — [Apology 1, Part 2, par. 186.]

“The soul in Adam is gone forth with its imagination into earthliness, away from true substantiality,” and since then “the soul hath no image or body which remaineth eternally, unless it be through Christ regenerated out of its first substantiality.” — [Apology 1, part 2, pars. 373 and 265.]

Therefore “we must introduce our imagination and desire into him, that our tinder of the faded image in him may begin to glimmer or glow in the Spirit and power of Christ.” — [Apology 3, text 2, par. 49.]

For more on the power of imagination, see [Magia](#).

Impressure or impression. A Paracelsian term probably best understood as “manifestation.” A wave of the sea makes an impressure on the air; i.e., the air is forced into a shape of the exact negative dimensions of the wave. Everything that manifests displaces something else, hence, “impression.” Everything imprints its own image on nature.

Incarnation the becoming-man (*menschwerdung*) of Jesus Christ. It is not merely a historical event, but an ongoing event.

“Jesus Christ, the Son of God, must become man, and be born in you, if you will know God: otherwise you are in the dark stable, and go about groping and feeling, and look always for Christ, at the right hand of God, supposing that he is a great way off; you cast your mind aloft above the stars and seek God, as the sophisters teach you, who represent God as one afar off, in heaven. If you would find him, seek him in his source or property, which is everywhere; all is full of God, and he shineth in the darkness; God is in your dark heart, though in another Principle; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; the Holy Spirit of God is the key in the centre: go out from the desire of the flesh, in a true earnest repentance, and put all your will, reason, and thoughts into the mercy of God; and so the Word of God (viz. his beloved Heart) will get a form in you: and then you stand before the crib where Jesus is born: and then incline yourself towards the Child, and offer him your heart, and Christ will be born in you.” *Threefold Life* ch. 3

“If it could possibly have been that God might have taken away Adam's sin in such a manner [as a magistrate pardons a criminal], God had not needed to become man, and so have brought us into God again: He might rather have forgiven Adam his sin, as a prince pardoneth a murderer: No, you yourself must go out from sin, and enter into the will of God; for God doth not stand by as a king, and forgive sins with words: It must be power: You must go out from the fire into the light; for God is no image for us to stand before, and give good words to, but he is a spirit, and penetrateth through the heart and reins, that is, soul and spirit: He is the fire of love, and his centre of nature is the fire of anger; and if you were in hell among all the devils, yet then you

are in God, for the anger is also his, it is his abyss; and therefore when you go out from that, you go into the love of God, into the liberty that is without source [or pain].” *Three Principles* 11:62

Language of Nature See Signature. “SUL is the soul, PHUR is the prima materia...” “MER is attraction, CU resistance, both caught up in RI, the whirling generative wheel, US is the swift fire-flash – hence Mercurius is the first four properties of nature, etc.”

The first syllable generates subsequent syllables, which express the power or virtue of the first.

Ellistone: “Words are *vehicula rerum*, they are formed to express Things, not bare Sounds, or empty Airs. Now he who rightly understands the Ground of the Cabala and Magia, and knows how the Language of Nature speaks in every Tongue, might well translate this author. But the bare Letter of his Writings, though ever so exactly translated, will not give the Understanding of them, but the Spirit of Regeneration in Christ, in whom the Fulness of the Deity dwells corporeally.”

“Concerning *the language of nature*, I certify you that it is so; but what I understand in it, I cannot teach or give another; indeed I can give a signification thereof, how it is to be understood: but it requireth much room; and there must be *a personal conference* and intercourse in it, it is not to be set down in writing.” Epistle 23:14

Boehme did make an earlier effort to “set it down in writing” in *The Threefold Life* 16:38 ff., interpreting *the Lord’s Prayer in German* according to the language of nature.

Limbus/Limus the male counterpart of the female Matrix. Limbus is seed, Matrix is soil. Substantiality. “Two Sexes sprung out of one Essence; the one according to the Limbus in the Form of Fire, and the other according to the Aquaster [or Spirit of the Water] in the watery Form; yet so mixed, that they were alike as to the Body. And so the Male was qualified according to the Limbus, or Form of Fire, and the Female according to the Aquaster in the watery Form.” (TP 8:38-42)

“3. For after the Fall God said also to Adam and Eve; Earth thou art, and to Earth thou shalt return again: And if I had not considered the Limbus, (out of which the Earth was,) I should have been so blind still: That [Limbus] showed me the Ground of what Adam was before and after the Fall.” TP 10:3

Used 67 times in *The Three Principles* (1619), once in next book, *The Threefold Life* (1620), then drops from his vocabulary until it reappears in *Mysterium Magnum* (1623) as “Limus.”

The Latin “limbus” is *edge or border*, “Limbo.”

Lubet a Longing Delight or Lust. The Lubet of Liberty stirs the Abyss to manifestation.

Ellistone: "The Word in the Dutch is Lust, which signifies a longing Desire or Will to a Thing; also a Delight, or contented Joy; sometimes Imagination and Lust. But because our Word Lust is commonly used in the worst Sense (a Longing after Evil and Vanity) and would not properly agree to, or fully express the German Word Lust in all places, I have generally translated it Lubet, from the Latin Word *Lubitus*, whereby is meant the divine *Benepiacitum*, or good Pleasure. By it is understood the Origin to a Desire in the eternal Nothing, or pregnant Magic, God's free Well-liking to the Desire of the Manifestation of Nature and Creature, without which all had been an eternal Stillness in the Nothing. This Lubet in Man is the moving Will to Good or Evil, Light or Darkness, Love or Anger." Ellistone

It is of the first principle.

See Freher's diagrams, 1-5. A harsh lubet and a meek, gentle lubet run together through the first three properties, till the harsh is dissolved in the flagrat of the fourth principle.

Magia/Magic derives from "mag" or "maga," an ancient word of unknown origin (possibly from the Iranian language Avestan), meaning "wise one" or "great one" and from which derive the words mage, magus, magi, magic, magnitude, magnify, magnetic, magnificent, magnanimous, magnesium, magistrate, majesty, major and the prefix mega-. The three wise men (Matthew ch. 2) were "*magos*" (Gk). The mythical (?) father of alchemy was Hermes Trismegistus (Thrice-great).

Imagination is not etymologically linked to *magia*, but in Boehme's Language of Nature the words are connected by the syllable *mag* (in Latin and German as well as English). The two terms are closely related in his system.

Sparrow and Ellistone translate Boehme's *magia* alternately as "magia" or "magic," solely along grammatical lines, just as *magische* (adj.) is rendered "magic" or "magical" depending on its placement in a sentence. There does not appear to be any nuance of meaning between these usages.

Magia is "the hidden working of the will," a chain of cause-and-effect not perceived by the five senses. Magia is also "knowledge of the hidden working."

In Boehme, *divine magia* is contrasted with "heathen magic." "The natural magus has power only over nature." One proceeds from God's Spirit, the other from the "instigation, dominion and government of the stars."

"3. With the Egyptians the magic art and skill was common. But when it was misused to witchcraft, it was extirpated; although it remained among the heathen till the kingdom of Christ, till the divine magia sprang up. Then the natural magia was suppressed among the

Christians, which in the beginning was well that it was suppressed, for the heathenish faith was thereby allayed and quenched; and the magic images of nature, which they honoured for gods, were rooted out of men's hearts.

4. But when the Christian faith was common, then came other magi up, viz. the sects in Christendom, which they set up for gods, instead of the images of heathen idols, and drove on greater delusions than the heathen with their magic idols.

5. For the heathen looked upon the ground of the possibility and working of nature. But these set themselves above the ground of nature, merely in a historical faith, and say that men ought to believe that which they contrive.

6. As at this very day titular Christendom is full of such magi as have no natural understanding, either of God or of nature more among them, but only an empty babbling of a supernatural magic ground, wherein they have set up themselves for idol-gods, and understand neither the divine nor natural magia, so that the world is made stock blind by them. Whence the contention and strife in faith [and religion] is arisen, that men talk much of faith, one drawing this way, another that way, and make a multitude of opinions, which are altogether worse than the heathenish images, which indeed had their ground and foundation in nature. But these images have no ground, either in nature or in the supernatural divine faith, but are dumb idols, and their ministers are Baal's ministers.

7. And as it was highly necessary and good that the natural magia was discontinued amongst the Christians, where the faith of Christ was manifest: so now at present it is much more necessary that the natural magia were again manifest; that indeed titular Christendom's idols which it makes to itself might, through nature, be made manifest and known, that man might know in nature the outspoken or expressed formed Word of God, as also the new regeneration, and also the fall and perdition. That thereby the contrived supernatural idols might be suppressed, that men might at length in nature learn to understand the Scriptures, seeing men will not confide in the spirit of God in the divine magia of true faith, but lay their foundation upon the tower of Babel, in the contention and contrived idol-opinions, viz. in the edicts and traditions of men.

8. I do not say that men should seek and preach the heathenish magia again, and take up heathen idols again, but that it is needful to learn to search the ground of nature, viz. the formed Word of God in love and anger, with its re-expression; that men might not be so blind concerning the essence of all essences." *Mysterium Magnum* ch. 68:3-8

(Stone-church theology is not false magia but non-magia – a self-referential, self-contained cloud of words that apprehends neither nature nor deity.)

Magical knowledge is thought-without-image. Thought-with-image, *imagination*, stirs the magia to creative action.

Imagination shapes the thing desired and magia brings it into substance, but not always in the desired form. Imagination always goes forth in the impessure and causes change, because it moves the magia, but subconscious forces and conflicting desires may bring confusing, undesired results. Only the Magus affects change according to *will*, through “magical understanding.” The false Magus moves the magia to shape substance into conformity with his will. The true Magus, with a resigned heart and will, imagines into the heart of God.

“A will is not a being, but the will's imagination makes being.” *Incarnation* 2:2:4

Magia is not a force that the Creator added to creation to enable us to “work magic.” It is a primordial will.

“Nothing is eternal, except it have its original from the eternal magic fire.” *Forty Questions* 1:180

“Everything came into existence out of Magia; for in eternity, in the abyss, there exists nothing but that which is Magia.” (*Theos. Quest.*, 194.)

“The magic power is the Spirit desirous for being. It is essentially nothing but will, but it enters into existence. It is the greatest mystery; it is above nature, and forces nature to assume forms according to the form of its will. It introduces the foundation into the abyss of the groundlessness, and changes nothing into something. It is the mother of eternity and of the essentiality of all beings. In it are contained all the forms of the latter.” Third of *Six Theosophic Points*

Magia is a will that creates or attracts what it desires.

1. Magia is the mother of eternity, of the being of all beings; for it creates itself, and is understood in desire.
2. It is in itself nothing but a will, and this will is the great mystery of all wonders and secrets, but brings itself by the imagination of the desireful hunger into being.
3. It is the original state of Nature. Its desire makes an imagination (*Einbildung*), and imagination or figuration is only the will of desire. But desire makes in the will such a being as the will in itself is.
4. True Magia is not a being, but the desiring spirit of the being. It is a matrix without substance, but manifests itself in the substantial being.
5. Magia is spirit, and being is its body; and yet the two are but one, as body and soul is but one person.
6. Magia is the greatest secrecy, for it is above Nature, and makes Nature after the form of its will. It is the mystery of the Ternary, viz. it is in desire the will striving towards the heart of God.

24. In sum: Magia is the activity in the Will-spirit. (Fifth point of *Six Mystical Points*)

See William Law's *The Way to Divine Knowledge* 2:85ff.

When we sleep we fall back into the magia. Asleep, we are what we were before the will of the magia imagined us into manifestation in all three principles. Each awakening is a re-creation.

"Imagination is a will." Self-will easily leads to self-deception, since self-will does not submit to truth, but believes what it wills to believe. The difference between *magia* and false *magia* (false imagination, phantasy) is that the latter is dispelled by a resigned will. (see *The Way to Christ*, "Of True Resignation")

In *Mysterium Pansophicon* Boehme develops a female magia and male magus.

Majesty, the Light of the Glorious Son of God, the second Principle, according to which only God is called God, for according to the First, viz., the Father's Property, he is not called God, but a consuming Fire.

Matrix the fruitful bearing womb of Eternity in the first and second principles. In the third principle the matrix is the web of life, the laws of nature, mother earth, the stars and four elements (TP ch. 8). *Matrix*, *matter*, *material*, all derive from the Latin *mater* (mother).

"All that has been born in this third Principle continues eternally in the Matrix. And if a Man in this Lifetime is not reborn into the second principle, then he shall remain eternally in the Matrix, yet not reach the Light of God. The Matrix is inanimate and void of Understanding, and in this World there is no true Understanding, either in the Stars, or in the Elements; and in all its Creatures there is only an Understanding of how to operate, to nourish itself, and to increase, in the matrix." See *The Three Principles* ch. 5

"God generated the third Principle, that he might be manifested by the *material* World." Matter is the mirror in which Deity sees himself, Sophia is the light of the mirror.

The Virgin Sophia (Divine Wisdom) stands in the same place as the Matrix but is not comprehended by it.

The Matrix is structure with no substance, essence or being of its own. Think of the laws of nature before the Big Bang, which existed but had nothing to operate upon. Once substance came into manifestation, it was inexorably driven and shaped by the will of the matrix.

Moses not a lawgiver but a mystical Cabalist. Reading Torah according to "the outward understanding" infallibly leads to error. Boehme said that he never understood Moses till he "obtained the Pearl."

"You must be born anew, if you will see the Kingdom of God. Would you know, then lay aside your Scholar's Cap of Pride that is in your Mind, and walk along into the paradisiacal Garden of Roses, and there you shall find an Herb; if you eat of it, your Eyes will be opened, so that you shall see and know what Moses has wrote." Three Principles 8:35

Mysterium Magnum the Chaos out of which the Unity of God flows outward into Manifestation thru the Divine Wisdom. It is of the first Principle.

The Mysterium Magnum is a subject of the wisdom, where the breathing word, or the working willing power of the divine understanding, flows forth through the wisdom, wherein also the Unity of God together flows out, to its manifestation.

For in the Mysterium Magnum the eternal nature arises; and two substances and wills are always understood to be in the Mysterium Magnum: the first substance is the Unity of God, that is, the divine power and virtue, the outflowing wisdom. The second substance is the separable will, which arises through the breathing and out-speaking word; which will has not its ground in the Unity, but in the mobility of the effluence and out-breathing, which brings itself into one will, and into a desire to nature, viz. into the properties as far as fire and light: in the fire the natural life is understood; and in the light the holy life, that is, a manifestation of the Unity, whereby the Unity becomes a love-fire, or light.

And in this place or working God calls himself a loving, merciful God, according to the sharpened fiery burning love of the Unity; and an angry jealous God, according to the fiery ground, according to the eternal nature.

The Mysterium Magnum is that chaos, out of which light and darkness, that is, the foundation of heaven and hell is flown, from eternity, and made manifest; for that foundation which we now call hell (being a Principle of itself), is the ground and cause of the fire in the eternal nature; which fire, in God, is only a burning love; and where God is not manifested in a thing, according to the Unity, there is an anguishing, painful, burning fire.

This burning fire is but a manifestation of the life, and of the divine love; by which the divine love, viz. the Unity, kindles up, and sharpens itself for the fiery working of the power of God.

This ground is called Mysterium Magnum, or a chaos, because good and evil arise out of it, viz. light and darkness, life and death, joy and grief, salvation and damnation.

For it is the ground of souls and angels, and of all eternal creatures, evil as well as good; it is a ground of heaven and hell, also of the visible world, and all that is therein: therein have lain all things in one only ground, as an image lies hid in a piece of wood before the artificer does carve it out and fashions it.

Yet we cannot say that the spiritual world has had any beginning, but has been manifested from eternity out of that chaos; for the light has shone from eternity in the darkness, and the darkness has not comprehended it; as day and night are in one another, and are two, though in one.

I must write distinctly as if it had a beginning, for the better consideration and apprehension of the divine ground of the divine manifestation; and the better to distinguish nature from the Deity; also for the better understanding, from whence evil and good are come, and what the Being of all beings is. *Clavis*

Nature is of the first Principle and that in which standeth two Kingdoms; one, the pure Virgin Wisdom of God, the one holy Element, the cause of the four Elements and the Stars: The other, the severe fierce wrath: According to which God calleth himself a consuming Fire. It is therefore the great Mystery. Nature is nothing but the properties of the receivingness of the own arisen desire; which desire arises in the variation of the breathing word (that is, of the breathing power and virtue), wherein the properties bring themselves into substance; and this substance is called a natural substance, and is not God himself.

For though God dwells through and through nature, yet nature comprehends him but so far as the Unity of God yields itself into, and communicates itself with, a natural substance, and makes itself substantial, viz. a substance of light, which works by itself in nature, and pierces and penetrates nature; or else the Unity of God is incomprehensible to nature, that is, to the desirous receivingness.

Nature arises in the outflowing word of the divine perception and knowledge; and it is a continual framing and forming of sciences and perception: whatsoever the word works by the wisdom, that nature frames and forms into properties: Nature is like a carpenter, who builds a house, which the mind figured and contrived before in itself; so it is here also to be understood.

Whatsoever the eternal mind figures in the eternal wisdom of God in the divine power, and brings into an idea, that, nature frames into a property.

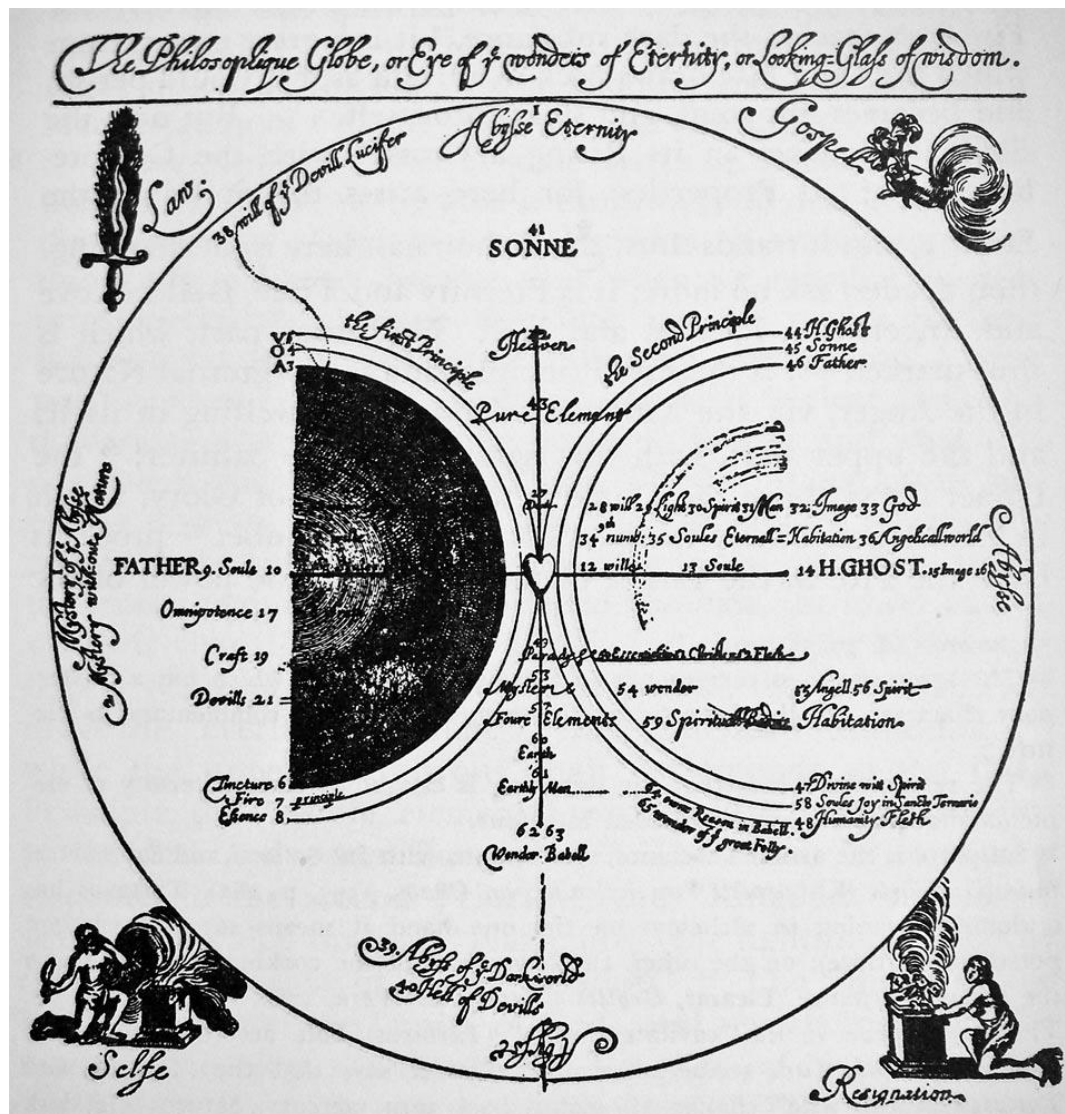
Nature, in its first ground, consists in seven properties; and these seven divide themselves into infinity.

From the *Clavis*

Philosopher's Stone If we will speak of the Noble Stone and bring it into the light to be known, we must first show the darkness and deformity of the Stone which hinder its being known. The Philosopher's Stone lies hidden in this world and may be had everywhere yet is not known; therefore, we should seek the reason why it is so hidden. The Stone lies in eternity; this Stone is Christ, the Son of the living God, which is discovered in all those that seek and find it. O how eagerly have the rational wise men of the schools of this world persecuted it

at all times, and at this very day. They have a glittering stone with a pleasant outside or sound, and they think it is the right one. They boast of it and would be honored for it as gods. But their stone is only a stone belonging to the wall of the great building of this world. If they see a man who carries the Noble Stone in him, he must be a fool with them because they have the wit and subtlety of the serpent. They who have the Stone are simple and without cunning. It is good to see with our own eyes, for he who sees with the eyes of another is always in doubt whether the spirit is true or false. Therefore, it is good to have the Noble Stone which gives assurance and exposes the false Magi. In this Stone there lies hidden whatever God and eternity, also heaven, the stars, and the elements contain and are able to do. There never was from eternity anything better or more precious than this, and it is offered by God and bestowed on man. Everyone may have it who desires it; it is in a simple form and has the power of the whole Deity in it. (*Threefold Life* ch. 7)

Philosophical Globe designed by Boehme for *Forty Questions of the Soul* and followed by an 8000-word exposition 1:162-249



There is a cross in the heart of God.
On the cross God eternally dies to his own wrath so that we can live.

"The Lamb slain from the foundations of the earth." Revelation 13:8

“Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me.” Matthew 16:24

“For whatsoever will attain the divine life, must go through the dying magic fire, and subsist therein, as the Heart on the Cross must subsist in the fire of God. Moreover, we must know, that in *Adam* we have turned ourselves away from the cross, and are above the cross with our lust and desire, Number 23, and gone with our will into self-government, and now death hath captivated us in itself: We must therefore sink down from death upon the cross, upon the line of Christ, into the Heart again, and be born anew in the Heart, or else death retaineth us captive.” 1:219-220

Property is a Divine Idea manifest in Nature. Nature, in its first Ground, consists in Seven Properties, and these Seven interact and divide into Infinity. Each entity in Creation is a unique balance or Temperature of the original seven Properties. Man, bird, bear, fish and firefly are all the same thing, in their physical properties, with the properties in different proportions.

“In God all beings are but one being, viz., an eternal One or unity, the eternal only good, which eternal One without severalty were not manifest to itself. Therefore the same hath breathed forth itself out of itself that a plurality and distinct variety might arise, which variety or severalty hath induced itself into a peculiar will and properties, the properties into desires, and the desires into beings.” Epistle 6:8-9

See Seven Properties.

Propriety/Proprium egoity, I-ness, I-hood, ownness, a something, a homogeneity.

Qual or anguish, is the third Form of the seven Properties of Eternal Nature, made of the first two Forms, and making a Sulphurous Spirit.

Hegel: “By anguish [Qual] is expressed that which we know as the absolute negativity — that is the self-conscious, self-experienced, the self-relating negativity which is therefore absolute affirmation. All Boehme's efforts were directed towards this point; the principle of the Notion is living in him, only he cannot express it in the form of thought. That is to say, all depends on thinking of the negative as simple, since it is at the same time an opposite; thus anguish [Qual] is the inward tearing asunder and yet likewise the simple. From this Boehme derives sources or springs [Quellen], a good play on the words. For pain [die Qual], this negativity, passes into life, activity, and thus he likewise connects it with quality, [Qualität], which he makes into *Quality*.”

Quality, the moving, stirring, boiling of a thing. Evil/good, heat/cold, bitter/sweet, the twofold life without which nothing subsists.

“Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.” Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

“There are found two qualities, a good one and an evil one, which are in each other as one thing in this world, in all powers, in the stars and the elements, as also in all creatures; and no creature in the flesh, in the natural life, can subsist, unless it has the two qualities.” Aurora 1:3

The evil quality and good quality correspond, respectively, with the first principle and second principle, and with the dark triad of the seven properties (1-2-3) and the light triad of the seven properties (5-6-7). The dark, fiery quality is the source of all life, and not evil while it remains in

the hiddenness. Lucifer penetrated too deeply into the hidden mysteries and brought the hidden fire into manifestation.

George Allen, Foreword to *The Threefold Life of Man*: “He says that the first three forms [properties], the harshness, the attraction, and the bitterness, should always remain in the hiddenness, and never be manifested. But what is in the hiddenness is utterly unknown and can have no name at all, for we cannot name (define) what we do not know. Hence the names harshness, attraction, bitterness, only belong to these when they are manifested. Not manifested, they are basal forces of no known quality, and not rightly regarded as hidden evil, but as hidden bases which, if manifested, must manifest as evil, but are not evil so long as they are not manifested.

“The corollary of this is most interesting. If Lucifer could be put into the hiddenness, he would cease to be evil; for evil is only evil when brought out of the hiddenness into manifestation. But this is just what Boehme says will happen in the end. The first principle and all contained in it will be so shut up that no knowledge of it can ever obtain in the second principle. If this is not the equivalent of being put into the hiddenness, I know not to what it is equivalent. Lucifer is clearly (in Boehme's system) the external and open manifestation of certain basal forces which should never be explored, or known, or come to manifestation. So long as they do not, they are necessary and right, and are the very fountain powers to manifestation which, apart from them, could not be effected. I find here the most profound and suggestive hint at the solution of the problem of evil that has ever been given to the world. Here it is impossible to do more than merely indicate it roughly. Evil is not a positive ‘thing,’ but a negative appearance: it is what seems to arise when the right thing is in the wrong place; on the surface when it should be underneath. To cause it to appear needs no strong, positive ‘let there be.’ Mighty and powerful for harm as it appears, its power lies only in the power of a false imagination. In a state where no false imagination could arise, no evil could arise; therefore there is a sense in which it cannot exist for God: and yet there is a sense in which it can, for God must deal with all that appears to be to man. But He sees it only, so to speak, through fallen human eyes; and not as a real thing, but as a delusion of His creatures. We know it is not in heaven; and—unless we can conceive that in the infinite there can be anything real lacking—we must allow that whatever is not in heaven is not real in the absolute sense.”

“Love. It appears so weak that it cannot threaten or use force to compel response; it prefers to seem to yield, to give way; yet always, in the end, it wins. It is the one invincible force. Why is this? If Boehme is right, it is because in everything there is a quality on the surface, and a power in the hiddenness; and if the quality appears weak, the power is strong; and if the quality appears strong, the power is weak. The man who scoffs at love, and prefers to compel and dominate in his own power, in the end always fails to accomplish his end. Strange, therefore, as the idea may seem to us at first sight, and the reverse of all that we should naturally be inclined to expect, yet deep reflection will show that there is very much to be said for it, and that it is well worthy of consideration; especially as it affords such a splendid and effective explanation of things as we find them.” Foreword, *The Threefold Life of Man*.

“What seems to be, Is, To those to whom it seems to Be, & is productive of the most dreadful consequences to those to whom it seems to Be.” Blake, *Jerusalem* 36:51

Reason In Boehme, reason is synonymous with SELF – viz. the false self, the blind guide, the deranged monkey that clammers around while we try to pray, meditate and study; the cause of all crippling self-consciousness and chronic doubt, “the dark reasoning spectre, an abstract negating power that negatives every thing;” (Blake) the author of war, religion and the state. It is the opposite of what it claims to be; two turns removed from reality, the representation of a representation, forever in a state of semi-madness or utter madness.

“The Spectre is, in Giant Man, insane, and most deform’d.” *Jerusalem* 33:4

Each Man is in his Spectre’s power
Till the arrival of that hour
When his Humanity awake
And he cast his Spectre into the lake.

Reason is not synonymous with “mind,” but only a provisional component of mind. It is a function of the brain and serves the interests of the animal body.

“In this World there is no true Understanding, either in the Stars, or in the Elements; and in all its Creatures there is only an Understanding of how to operate, to nourish itself, and to increase, in the matrix.” *Three Principles* 5:13

Nietzsche observed that the whole of academic “philosophy” is really a proclamation of the class interests of philosophy professors.

The discovery that reason is not the *vehicle* but the *obstacle* is the philosopher’s *pons asinorum* – the “Bridge of Asses.” It is the hardest thing to get over, but once we “go out from reason,” as JB says, the journey of discovery begins.

“For there is no other way which can be more perfect than to go out with the will from Reason, and not will to seek oneself; but to cast oneself wholly into God’s love and into God’s will, and to let be all that Reason throws in the way.” *Incarnation* 3:2:7

This invective against reason may seem unreasonable, considering reason’s recent spectacular advances in theoretical physics, space exploration and communication and information technology (especially when the lexicographer is using the latter two to create and distribute this book). But, as we learn from Boehme’s teaching of the two qualities, everything is good in its proper place; nothing is bad in itself but becomes bad when wrongly placed. Reason ought to remain in “the hiddenness.”

We are continually seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting without being conscious of eyes, ears, nerves, nose and tongue – our mind is occupied with the things the senses apprehend, not on the senses themselves. In that sense, our five senses are in “the hiddenness.” Reason, likewise, should remain in the hiddenness, not conscious of itself. Scientists and engineers make good use of reason because they apply the cognitive faculty to the things studied, not to itself. For reason to study itself and try to understand itself is as absurd as an eye trying to see itself. When reason applies itself to the perennial question, “Who am I?”, it produces ridiculous answers. Reason is powerful when fixed on objects outside itself. It strives in vain for subjective knowledge of itself.

In our fallen state, the reasoning ego is the center of the human personality, the false self. In the higher understanding, consciousness moves toward the center of the innermost ground, and from that standpoint gains an *objective* understanding of the ego. From the inner center we see the outer personality as a fleeting phenomenon of space-time, a curiosity that will vanish from the cosmos when the body dies, but consciousness will remain. Whether we survive death as a separate entity or are reabsorbed into the Godhead is a matter of indifference, because there is only One Consciousness in the universe, and we are it. The question “Who am I?” becomes “What am I?” and the answer is “I AM.”

Boehme has been criticized for failing to make the distinction between subjective/objective and “projecting the contents of his psyche on the cosmos.” But that is precisely what our ancestors did for millennia.

“The ancient poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses, calling them by the names and adorning them with properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged and numerous senses could perceive.” Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Does the disappearance of this magical worldview prove that it was flawed, or does its ubiquity in human history demonstrate that it is natural, healthy and better suited to nature than our way of thought?

This Age of Reason congratulates itself on the progress from superstition to science, monarchy to democracy, patriarchy to gender equality, tribalism to “one human family.”

“‘We have invented happiness,’ say the Last Men. And they blink.” (Nietzsche)

Admitting, as we must, that in the perennial contest of ideas the hermetic science of Jacob Boehme has been vanquished by empirical science; and admitting, too, that none of us are in a position to denigrate science since we reap its benefits every moment, it is still hard to shake off the suspicion that what we call “science” is what Jacob Boehme called “the false magia” of Egypt, and that humanity has yet to learn that *reason*, like fire and water, is a good servant and a bad master, especially now, when humanity faces the real possibility of reason, in the form of AI, becoming our master.

Salitter/Salniter saltpeter, or potassium nitrate, prized by alchemists for its explosive properties, is the fourth of the essential properties (fire), after Sulphur, Mercury and Sal.

“Divine *Salitter*, represented by the Earth, but like the pure Heaven; in it are moving, springing Powers, producing all manner of Divine Trees, Plants, etc., with heavenly Colours, Smells, Tastes; whereof this World’s Trees, Gold, Silver, Precious Stones, etc., are hard, dark, dead Shadows. But this *Salitter* and *Mercurius*, (i.e.) Divine *Mercurius*, is the food of Angels and Holy Souls. the corporeal drying. Therein is the seed of the whole deity, and it receives the seed and generates the fruit according to the qualities of the seed. *I call the Salitter of God, the comprehensibility, wherein the heavenly figures or shapes arise*. The seven qualifying or fountain spirits have their compacted or incorporated body out of nature, that is, out of the seventh nature-spirit in the divine power.” (Stoudt)

Ignited Sulphur of the salnitral sunburst, or more precisely, that which in the Sulphur is awakened by the heat arising into a sunburst out of the Brimstony, Watery, and Earthy Properties, whereby the Properties are manifested.

Salitter (Salnitrum) is a major theme in *Aurora*, drops from his vocabulary in the next three books, then reappears in *Signature* and *Mysterium Magnum* as “Salniter.”

See the fourth property.

Satan the Throne-Angel of the second principle, prince of the angelic host under the dominion of the Son. Sin entered the cosmos when Satan imagined into the fiery source of the first principle, coveted the power of the Father, “kept not his first estate, but left his habitation” (Jude 6) and crossed over into the principle of the Father, taking his host of angels with him. (Revelation 12:4)

Michael, the Throne-Angel of the first principality/principle, always appears in the Bible as the warrior angel opposing Satan (Daniel 10:13-21, 12:1; Jude 9, Revelation 12:7) because it was his principality that Satan invaded.

Uriel/Ariel is the Throne-Angel of the third principle. Satan/Lucifer’s original angelic name is not known, because he is that angel no more.

This is how JB addresses the thorny problem of theodicy, i.e. explaining how evil, like everything, has its source in God but is not in God. The fiery wrath of the first principle is not evil; it is the source of all life and motion. It was supposed to remain in the hiddenness, unknown to creatures. Evil appeared when Satan brought the hidden fire into manifestation. Nothing is evil in itself. Evil is the appearance of the right thing in the wrong place. Evil is not a substance, essence or being; evil is a quality, “the moving, stirring, boiling of a thing” out of its proper place in the hiddenness and into outward manifestation. Evil is not a thing; it is an

equation, the dynamic between things wrongly related. The first principle is a consuming fire, the desirous, lusty, hungry, ruthlessly logical Eternal Nature, and that is exactly how evil appears when manifested in the third principle. (see George Allen's brilliant exposition in quality)

Some interpreters understand Boehme's Satan as "the Spirit of Error, not a Creaturely Devil, but the Property of such an Erroneous Spirit," (Edward Taylor), seeing an abstract concept or symbolic representation of "error" as the only useful understanding of the Satan myth. But JB always writes of Satan/Lucifer as a personal, objective reality and, in a rare display of humor, even recommends taunting him. "When the devil reminds thee of thy sins, say, 'Wast thou not once an archangel? Yet now dost thou follow me with thy dung-bag and collect my sins. Thou wouldst have been better to have kept thy first estate. Begone, Satan, and take these my sins with thee.'" *The Four Complexions*

In *Milton and Boehme*, Margaret Bailey shows how profoundly John Milton was influenced by Boehme's doctrine of Satan, which was passed on to the English-speaking world through *Paradise Lost*. Today, not one Christian in 10,000 reads Milton or Boehme, yet the diabolology of *Paradise Lost* is still taught as doctrine in Sunday schools and from the pulpit – an example of how Boehme's thought still runs through western culture like a hidden stream.

In the Old Testament, Satan is a minor figure, appearing only thrice as one of the "sons of god," (Job ch. 1-2) a tempter (1 Chron. 21), and accuser (Zech. 3). In the New Testament he emerges as "the ruler of this world." (John 12) The popular conception of Satan as a fallen archangel, the second most powerful being in the universe, pure evil, leader of the first rebellion and king of all demons can only be teased out of the Bible by assuming that Satan, Lucifer, the devil, the serpent (Gen. 3), the Dragon (Rev. 12), the King of Babylon (Isaiah 14) and the King of Tyre (Ezekiel 28) are all the same entity.

Science like abyss, magia and will is not being. Science is the negative impressure that not-being makes on being, giving shape to substance, somewhat in the way that a wave, stone or tree gives shape to the air.

From the *Clavis*: The word Science is not so taken by me as men understand the word *scientia* in the Latin tongue; for I understand therein even the true ground according to sense, which, both in the Latin and all other languages is missed and neglected by ignorance; for every word in its impressure, forming, and expression, gives the true understanding of what that thing is that is so called.

You understand by Science some skill or knowledge, in which you say true, but do not fully express the meaning.

Science is the root to the understanding, as to the sensibility; it is the root to the center of the impressure of nothing into something; as when the will of the abyss attracts itself into itself, to a center of the impressure, viz. to the word, then arises the true understanding.

The will is in the separability of the Science, and there separates itself out from the impressed compaction; and men first of all understand the essence in that which is separated, in which the separability impresses itself into a substance.

For essence is a substantial power and virtue, but Science is a moving flitting one, like the senses; it is indeed the root of the senses.

Yet in the understanding, in which it is called Science, it is not the sensing, but a cause of the sensing, in that manner as when the understanding impresses manifests itself in the mind, there must first be a cause which must bring forth the mind, from which the understanding flows forth into its contemplation: Now this Science is the root to the fiery mind, and it is in short the root of all spiritual beginnings; it is the true root of souls, and proceeds through every life, for it is the ground from whence life comes.

I could not give it any other better name, this does so wholly accord and agree in the sense; for the Science is the cause that the divine abyssall will compacts and impresses itself into nature, to the separable [various], intelligible, and perceivable life of understanding and difference; for from the impressure of the Science, whereby the will attracts it into itself the natural life arises, and the word of every life originally.

The distinction or separation out of the fire is to be understood as follows: The eternal Science in the will of the Father draws the will, which is called Father, into itself, and shuts itself into a center of the divine generation of the Trinity, and by the Science speaks itself forth into a word of understanding; and in the speaking is the separation in the Science; and in every separation there is the desire to the impressure of the expression, the impressure is essential, and is called divine essence.

From this essence the word expresses itself in the second separation, that is, of nature, and in that expression (wherein the natural will separates itself in its center, into a perception, the separation out of the fiery Science is understood; for thence comes the soul and all angelical spirits.

The third separation is according to the outward nature of the expressed formed word, wherein the bestial Science lies, as may be seen in the treatise of the *Election of Grace*, which has a sharp understanding, and is one of the clearest of our writings. (*Clavis* 210-219)

The word *Science*, in this context, appears in the later writings, *The Election of Grace*, *Mysterium Magnum* and *Clavis*.

Scientia can be translated desire or attraction, the first property.

See Essence

Seed of Woman First messianic prophecy, Genesis 3:15, God said to the serpent, “I will put enmity between you and the woman. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

Election 7:49. For in *Eve* lay the Tincture of the *Light* and of the spiritual Water, and in that same the holy Tincture incorporated itself in the Word in the Name JESU, and so as a Pledge that it would break the bestial *Matrix*, and change it into a holy [*Matrix*.]

50. It was not to be done through *Adam's* fiery Tincture, but through, and in that Part of the Adamical Light's Tincture, wherein the *Love* burnt; which was parted into the Woman, that is, into the *Genetrix* of all Men.

51. Whereinto God's Voice promised to introduce again a *living* holy *Ens* from Heaven, and to generate anew in Divine Power the faded disappeared Image of God, which stood therein.

The Seven Properties (or Forms, Qualities, Fountain-Spirits) proceed from the Seven Spirits of God. (Rev. 4:5, 5:6) The Three Principles are the logic or structure of the Divine Being and Creation; the Seven Properties are the Process or Motion. Though Boehme did not use this grammar, the three principles might be understood as *noun*; the seven properties as *verb*: attracting, resisting, whirling, flashing, shining, sounding, being.

This diagram, devised by JB himself, is from the “William Law Edition,” book 2.



The Seven Forms of Spirits, mentioned Revel. Chap. I.

♄	☾	The First	Form	Harsh Desiring Will	1. Dark-World; a Similitude of it is a Candle.
♁	♂	Second		Bitter or Stinging	
♂	♂	Third		Anguish, till the Flash of Fire	
☉		Fourth		Fire	2. Fire World; a Similitude of it is the fire of a Candle.
				Dark Fire	
				Light Fire	
♂	♂	Fifth		Light or Love, whence the water of Eternal Life flows	3. Light World; a Similitude of it is the Light of a Candle.
♂	♂	Sixth		Noise, Sound, or Mercury	
☾	♄	Seventh		Substance or Nature	

The First Principle.

The Dark World: hence
God the Father is call-
ed an Angry, Zealous,
Jealous God, and a Con-
suming Fire.

Dark or Fire of Wrath

The Second Principle.

The Light World: hence
God the Son, the Word,
the Heart of God, is
called a Loving and
Merciful God.

Light or Fire of Love

The Third Principle.

This World of four Elements, which is produced out of the two Inward Worlds, and is a Glass of them, wherein Light and Darkness, Good and Evil are mixed, it is not Eternal, but has a Beginning and an End.

The First Property ♄

Saturn. The First property is the desire which causes and makes harshness, sharpness, hardness, cold, and substance. ATTRACTING

The Second Property ♂

Jupiter. The Second property is the stirring or attraction of the desire; it makes stinging, breaking, and dividing of the hardness; it cuts asunder the attracted desire, and brings it into multiplicity and variety; it is a ground of the bitter pain, and also the true root of life; it is the Vulcan that strikes fire. RESISTING

The Third Property

Mars. The Third property is the perceptibility and feelingness in the breaking of the harsh hardness; and it is the ground of anguish, and of the natural will, wherein the eternal will desires to be manifested; that is, it will be a fire or light, viz. a flash or shining, wherein the powers, colors, and virtues of the wisdom may appear: in these three first properties consists the foundation of anger, and of hell, and of all that is wrathful. WHIRLING caused by the STRIFE between the first two.

The first three properties are the wheel of anguish that condition the birth of light and life. Think of a turbine that superheats and explodes. The explosion is the fourth property.

The Fourth Property

Sol. The Fourth property is the fire, in which the Unity appears, and is seen in the light, that is, in a burning love; and the wrath in the essence of fire. FLASHING, SUNBURST, FIREFLASH, SALNITRAL FLAGRAT

The insane movement of the wheel of anguish stops in order to transform itself into harmonious movement. Here light shines out of darkness and life is born.

The Fifth Property

Venus. The Fifth property is the light, with its virtue of love, in and with which the Unity works in a natural substance. The second principle. SHINING, LOVE-LIGHT

The Sixth Property

Mercury. The Sixth property is the sound, voice, or natural understanding, wherein the five senses work spiritually, that is, in an understanding natural life. SOUNDING, JOY

The Seventh Property

Luna. The Seventh property is the subject, or the contents of the other six properties, in which they work, as the life does in the flesh; and this seventh property is rightly and truly called the ground or place of nature, wherein the properties stand in one only ground. The third principal. BEING, BODY

The first three properties correspond to the first principle. These are the dark properties, the wheel of anguish, and the source of all life and motion. The fourth property is ignition, through which the three first break through into the world of light. The fifth, sixth and seventh

correspond to the second principle, the light-world. The fourth property is the third principle, the material world where darkness and light interact and everything is an interchange of opposites. All phenomena are a rhythmically balanced interchange (love-play) of the seven principles. (See Temperature)

The first and the seventh property must be regarded as one, also the second and sixth, and also the third and fifth, but the fourth is the division. *Clavis* 126 [In *Clavis* Boehme exchanges Jupiter and Mercury in the order of planets. Here I retain the original order, as he usually does.]

Clavis 131-132 Now these are the seven properties in one only ground; and all seven are equally eternal without beginning; none of them can be accounted the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, or last; for they are equally eternal without beginning, and have also one eternal beginning from the Unity of God. We must represent this in a typical way, that it may be understood how the one is born out of the other, the better to conceive what the Creator is, and what the life and substance of this world is.

The “first” four properties are the Four Elements: 1. Earth (Sal) 2. Water (Mercury) 3. Air (Sulphur) 4. Fire (Salniter)

The first four properties are not substances but states – solid, liquid, gas, plasma. Therefore the last three– 5. Light 6. Sound 7. Body – might also be understood as states.

The Platonic Forms are not images but states, relations, dynamics.

See *Signature of All Things*, ch. 9

The properties, taken from 1 to 7, describe the birth of God in the soul. The lusts of the flesh, or self-love (1) is at variance with spiritual aspiration (2), placing the soul on a whirling wheel of anguish (3). Then (4) “these four spirits move themselves in the flash, for all the four become living therein, and so now the power of these four riseth up in the flash, as if the life did rise up, and the power which is risen up in the flash is the love, which is the fifth spirit. (5) That power moveth so very pleasantly and amiably in the flash, as if a dead spirit did become living, and was suddenly in a moment set into great clarity or brightness.” (*Aurora* 11:15-16) The brightness illumines, mental anguish is ended and the joyful ringing of the mind (6) brings the inner light into outward manifestation (7).

Those for whom spiritual illumination came easily (and there are such) may wonder why such an arcane description is called for. But Breakthrough is often preceded by anguish, confusion and a darkness of the mind. Those who are presently in this state of anguish will be encouraged to know that they are only experiencing what Jacob Boehme (see *Aurora* ch. 19) and many others have experienced. Likewise those who have experienced enlightenment and are bewildered to find themselves back on the wheel of anguish again. “A bruised reed he will not break and a smoking flax he will not quench.”

Seven Spirits of God “And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.” Revelation 4:5

“And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.” Revelation 5:6

Aurora 10:3-6. All the seven spirits are generated one in another, the one continually generateth the other, not one of them is the first, nor is any one of them the last; for the last generateth as well the first as the second, third, fourth, and so on to the last. But why one is called the first, another the second, and so on, that is in respect to that which is the first in order to the imaging, framing and forming of a creature. For all the seven are equally eternal, and none of them has either beginning or end; and therefore, in that the seven qualities are continually generating one another, and that none is without the other, it followeth that there is ONE Only Eternal Almighty GOD. For, if anything be generated out of or in the divine being, that thing is not formed or framed by or through one spirit alone, but by all the seven.

Aurora 10:31-33 But here thou must know that one spirit alone cannot generate another, neither can two of them do it, but the birth of a spirit stands in the operation of all the seven spirits, six of them always generate the seventh, and so if one of them were not, then the others would not be either. But that I sometimes take only two or three to the nativity or birth of a spirit, I do that because of my own weakness, for in my corrupted brain I cannot bear them all seven at once in their perfection. I see them all seven very well, but when I speculate into them, then the spirit riseth up in the middlemost fountain or wellspring, where the spirit of life generateth itself, which goeth now upwards, now downwards, it cannot apprehend all the seven spirits in one thought, or at once, but only in part.

“And we admonish the Reader, not to understand the high supernatural Sense in an earthly Manner, where I speak of the generating of the *Mysterium Magnum*; for I thereby only intimate the *Ground*, out of which it is become earthly: Therefore I must often speak so, that the Reader may understand and consider it, and fall into the inward ground.” *Election* 3:37

- 1 J Abyss
- 2 E Will of the Abyss FATHER
- 3 H Byss – delight or impressure of the Will SON
- 4 O Science or Motion SPIRIT
- 5 V GOD in TRINITY
- 6 A WORD in GOD
- 7 H WISDOM

From *Four Tables of Divine Revelation*

The Seven Spirits of God manifest in the third principle (the outer, material world) as the Seven Properties of Nature.

Sidereal of the stars, or pertaining to astrology.

Signature is the outer form of a thing's inner essence. Every person, beast, plant, fish, stone, star and comet speaks a single word, and that word is its signature.

Paracelsus: "There is nothing corporeal that does not possess a soul."

John J. Stoudt: "All things, including men, are known by their signatures, and by external manifestations in sound, form, voice and speech a thing's hidden spirit is expressed. The signature is the expressed form of a being's inner essence...Boehme's signature is an epistemological and ontological key at the same time: a man's face shows his inward self, and by it the self can be known. As a principle of knowledge it is neither inductive nor deductive but productive, the necessary basis of created being. The doctrine of signatures is antagonistic to reason: the scientist who describes, measures, classifies things is interested in repeatable similarities and separating distinctions. Boehme sought to understand nature from within, without mathematics or logic, because he held that meaning rested on the concordance of inner opening and external form. His symbol was the blooming lily."

1. ALL whatever is spoken, written, or taught of God, without the Knowledge of the Signature is dumb and void of Understanding; for it proceeds only from an historical Conjecture, from the Mouth of another, wherein the Spirit without Knowledge is dumb, but if the Spirit opens to him the Signature, then he understands the Speech of another; and further he understands how the Spirit has manifested and revealed itself (out of the Essence through the Principle) in the Sound with the Voice. For though I see one to speak, teach, preach, and write of God, and though I hear and read the same, yet this is not sufficient for me to understand him; but if his Sound and Spirit out of his Signature and Similitude enter into my own Similitude, and imprint his Similitude into mine, then I may understand him really and fundamentally, be it either spoken or written, if he has the Hammer that can strike my Bell. 2. By this we know, that all human Properties proceed from one; that they all have but one only Root and Mother; otherwise one Man could not understand another in the Sound... *The Signature of All Things* ch. 1

Like many of Boehme's sublime teachings, the Signature has humble origins. The ancient Doctrine of Signatures held that a plant shaped like a body part was effective in treating that body part, and was related to the Law of Sympathy, according to which buttercups were used to treat jaundice, bloodstones to stop hemorrhaging, etc. Boehme adhered to the fundamental idea but said the healing properties of herbs were not so immediately visible to the outward eye.

What fascinated Boehme's contemporaries was his concept of a unifying *Signatura Rerum*, The Signature of All Things.

“THE whole outward visible World with all its Being is a Signature, or Figure of the inward Spiritual World; whatever is internally, and however its Operation is, likewise it has its Character externally; like as Spirit of each Creature sets forth and manifests the internal Form of its Birth, by its Body, so does the Eternal Being also.” *The Signature of All Things* 9:1

Sophia the true noble precious Image of Christ, viz., the Wisdom of God, the Tincture of the Light. The divine wisdom of *philosophia*, bestower of the garland of Christ, the Flower in Sharon, “the Rose in the Valley of Jericho, wherewith Solomon delighted himself, and termed it his dear Love, his chaste Virgin which he loved; as indeed all other Saints before and after him did. Whosoever obtains Her, obtains the Pearl.”

“Beloved Soul, if you will be earnest without Intermission, you shall certainly obtain the Favor of a Kiss from the Noble Sophia (Divine Wisdom) in the Holy Name JESUS; for She stands ever before the Door of the Soul, knocking, and warning the Sinner of his wicked Way. Now if at any moment the Soul desires Her Love, She is ready for it and kisses it with the Her Sweet Beams of Love, from whence the Heart receives Joy. But She does not hastily lay Herself in the Marriage-Bed with the Soul, that is, She does not hastily awaken the extinguished Heavenly Image in Herself, which disappeared in Adam in Paradise. No, there might be Danger to Man in that; for if Adam and Lucifer fell, having it manifested in them, the same may easily happen to Man, who is still so strongly enthralled in Vanity.” *The Way to Christ*

“Wisdom, the eternal virgin, the playmate of God to His honor and joy, becomes full of desire to behold the wonders of God that are contained within herself. Owing to this desire, the divine essences within her become active and attract the holy power, and thus she enters into a state of permanent being. By this she does not conceive of anything within herself; her inclination is resting in the Holy Spirit. She merely moves before God for the purpose of revealing the wonders of God.” (*Three Principles* 14:87.)

Ellistone: “And therefore whoever will be nurtured and trained up by Sophia, and learn to understand and speak the Language of Wisdom, must be born again of and in the Word of Wisdom, Christ Jesus, the Immortal Seed: The Divine Essence which God breathed into his Paradisiacal Soul must be revived, and he must become one again with that which he was in God before he was a Creature, and then his Eternal Spirit may enter into that which is within the Veil, and see not only the literal, but the moral, allegorical, and anagogical Meaning of the Wise, and their dark Sayings: He then will be fit to enter, not only into Solomon's Porch, the outer Court of Natural Philosophy, Sense and Reason, but likewise into the inward Court of holy and spiritual Exercises, in divine Understanding and Knowledge; and so he may Step into the most inward and holiest Place of Theosophical Mysteries, into which none are admitted to come, but those who have received the high and holy Unction.” *Signature* Preface

Source the original quality or essential property to Love and Anger, Light and Darkness, both according to time and Eternity. “By this are meant the first original Qualities or Properties

of both the inward Principles, as they break forth in the Sude of the Fire in the Flagrat of Love or Anger in Nature or Creature. For in the Darkness the Love-Ens, or Paradisiacal Light, is shut up in Death, and causes an austere dark Source, Pain, Horror, Torment, or Disquietude; and so it is the radical Property of the contentious Elements and Stars in the Curse of God: And in the Light the Life of Love breaks forth, and swallows up this wrathful Source of Darkness and Death, and turns it into Joy or a divine Source. So that by Source is understood the original Quality, Property, or Qualification of Evil, Darkness, Anger, Sorrow, Cursing, Damnation, Death, Hell; or the contrary to these in their divine Source, or essential working Property; both according to Time and Eternity.” (Ellistone)

“The human will separateth itself from God into its own selfness, and awakeneth its own self and burneth in its own source.” Third of the *Six Theosophical Points*, pars. 42-43

See Qual.

Spagyrics the alchemical study of plants. See *The Signature of All Things*

Spiritu Mundi world-spirit, “spirit of the great world,” the “clockwork out of the stars and elements.”

Zeitgeist, collective unconscious, herd psychology, mass movements, world religions, national politics and global hegemony are shaped by *Spiritu Mundi*. The lover of wisdom will “come out from” the spirit or current of the world system.

Eph. 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

“But there must be real earnestness; for we must subdue the astral spirit which rules in us. To do this, a sober calm life is necessary, with continual abandonment to God’s will. For, to subdue the astral influence, no wisdom or art will avail; but sobriety of life, with continual withdrawal from the influxes. The elements continually introduce the astral craving into his will. Therefore it is not so easy a thing to become a child of God; it requires great labour, with much travail and suffering.” *The Earthly and Heavenly Mystery* 9:2

Substance, *Being* and *Essence* are alternative translations of the same German word, *wesens*. Distinct from principle (a set of laws) and property (motion or potential motion). In

some usages can be understood as *hypostasis* (underlying reality), e.g., *Three Principles of the Divine Hypostasis*.

Sulphur, Mercury and Sal along with Salitter/Salniter, are the essences of the four Elements and the first four of the seven properties.

1. Sal, earth
2. Mercury, water
3. Sulphur, air
4. Salniter, fire

Sal is gravity, magnetism, inertia, the will to unity, wholeness. Mercury is the motion and separation of Nature, wherein each thing is figured according to its own Signature. Sulphur is sensate, perceiving, willing and growing life.

Not to be understood as material brimstone, quicksilver and salt, but the essences of these substances.

Boehme obtained this terminology from the physician Paracelsus. One may lament that he bewilders the modern reader with these antiquarian alchemical terms, but I can think of no abstract nouns that would have served him better than these word-symbols.

Temperature balance, unity of opposites, not of two opposites, but of seven. The term is always used in reference to the rhythmically balanced interaction of the seven properties. In these passages JB usually describes the properties according to their planetary names. In temperature the seven properties wrestle in a joyful “love-play,” all in equal weight.

“The seven heads of the beast are the seven properties of nature, which are departed from the temperature, and have attained seven heads, viz. a sevenfold will, whence the life is come to be in strife, misery, sickness and corruption; and the whore upon this beast is the soul, which is defiled as a whore, and enters before God with this whore's image, and plays the hypocrite in his presence. But the will of the seven-headed beast gives its power and strength to the whore, viz. to the soul, so that the soul sticks full of murder, pride, whorish lust, and self-honour.”

Mysterium Magnum 76:26-27

The soul is restored to temperature by meekness. The condition of temperature is “Sol at the center.”

“Whatever the first Desire with the Impression in Saturn makes Evil in the Wrath of Mars, that the Sun turns again into Good. As the divine Sun tinctures the Anger or Wrath of God, so that the wrathful Property of God's Anger is changed into a Joyfulness; so likewise the outward Sun tinctures the outward Sulphur, viz. Saturn and Mars, that there is a pleasant Temperature, viz. a. Growth, springing, and blooming in all Metals and Creatures; therefore the Sun is the Center,

which Reason will not believe; understand, in the planetary Orb, and in all Vegetables and Animals.” *Signature* 4:45

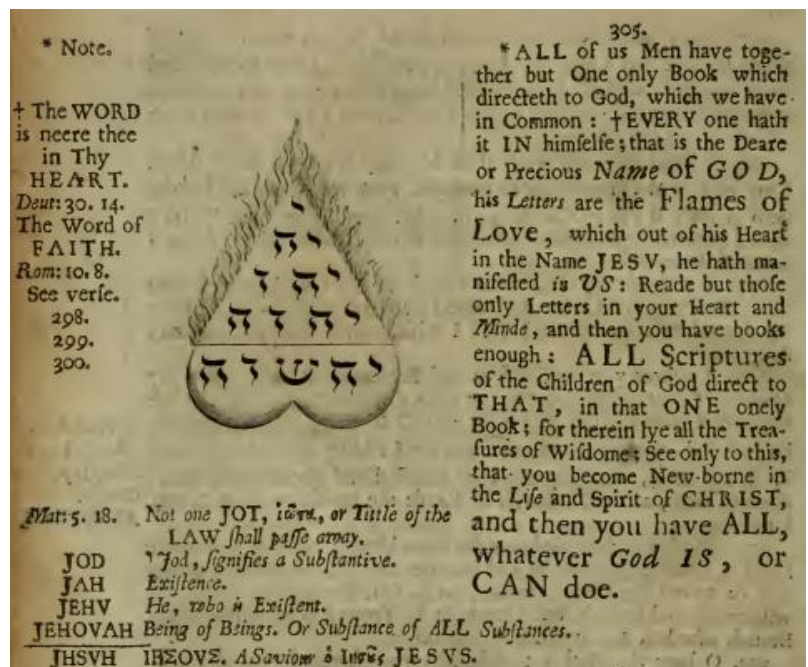
Ternarius Sanctum Holy Trinity.

Tetragrammaton יהוה

Yod-Hev-Vav-Hev The Hebrew name of God, translated IHVH, JHVH, YHVH, Jehovah, Yahweh, “I AM That I AM.”

See *The Threefold Life of Man* 16:65, and *The Four Tables of Divine Revelation*, table 2. See [Cabala](#).

Following Paracelsus, in the bottom row of this emblem (*Remainder* part II p. 54) Boehme inserts the letter *shin* into the center of the Tetragrammaton, forming the name JEHESHUA – the Hebrew name of Jesus.



The Three Principles

1st Principle – Dark World - desire, or will

2nd Principle – Light World - pleasure, or delight

3rd Principle – Fire World - proceeding, or outgoing

1st Principle, emanating from God the Father: darkness, wrath, jealousy, anguish, knowledge.

2nd Principle, emanating from the Son: light, love, meekness, friendliness, joy, wisdom.

3rd Principle, emanating from the Holy Spirit: the external world of stars and elements, in which good and evil, light and darkness are mixed and the Three Principles overlap and interpenetrate all Creation.

The First Principle is Hell, the Second Principle is Heaven.

Heaven and Hell are not created places, but uncreated places, and exist everywhere. The souls of the “dead” do not fly off to heaven or plummet into hell. They remain where they are, and find themselves in the principle to which they oriented themselves in life.

The first principle is the Eternal Nature. In the first principle God is not called God but “a wrathful consuming fire.”

The Father eternally generates the Son and the Son illuminates the “dark valley” of the Father. The Light is the second principle and only according to this principle is God called God. Therefore the Apostle can say, “God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all.”

“We know that God is a Spirit, and His eternal will is magical, that is desirous; He always maketh substance out of nothing, and that in a two-fold source, viz., according to the fire and light. Out of the fire cometh fierce wrath, climbing up pride, willing not to unite itself with the light, but a fierce, wrathful, eager, earnest will, according to which He is not called God, but a fierce, wrathful, consuming fire. This fire becometh also not manifest in the pure Deity, for the light hath swallowed up the fire into itself, and giveth to the fire its love, its substantiality, its water, so that in God's substance there is only love, joy, and a pleasant habitation, and no fire known. But the fire is only a cause of the desirous will and of the love, as also of the light and of the majesty, else there would be no substance: as it hath been expounded in the former writings.”
Incarnation, 1:11:44-48

All three Principles reside in humanity, since we, created in the image of God, are triune beings. In *The Three Principles* 7:21-23 JB describes how the three Principles appear in human nature:

21. The Source of the Darkness is the first Principle, and the Virtue of the Light is the second Principle, and the Out-Birth out of the Darkness by the Virtue of the Light, is the third Principle; and that is not called God: God is only the Light, and the Virtue of the Light, and that which goes forth out of the Light is the Holy Ghost.

22. You have a Similitude of this in yourself. Your Soul which is in you, gives Reason to you, whereby you think, consider and perceive; that represents God the Father: The Light which shines in your Soul, whereby you know the Virtue or Power in you, and lead and direct and order yourself with; that represents God the Son, or the Heart, the eternal Power and Virtue: And the Mind, in which the Virtue of the Light is, and that which proceeds from the Light wherewith you govern your Body; that represents the Holy Ghost.

23. The Darkness that is in you, which longs after the Light, that is the first Principle; the Virtue or Power of the Light which is in you, whereby you can see in your Mind without bodily Eyes, that is the second Principle; and the longing Virtue, that proceeds from the Mind, and attracts and fills, itself, from whence the material Body grows, that is the third Principle. And you may understand...how God is the Beginning and the first Virtue in all Things; and you understand, that in this gross, earthly body, you are not in Paradise. For that is but a misty, excrementitious, dusky, opaque Procreation, or Out-Birth in the third Principle.

See Mysterium Magnum and Eternal Nature

Tincture When an iron is heated red-hot, it remains iron but is “tinctured with the fire.” Dye “tinctures” water, i.e., changes its color but not its substance.

The soul can be tinctured with “the Ens of the fiery Love. Out of this fiery Ens of Love goes forth upward with the Spirit aloft, the *Tincture*, viz. the watery Spirit, the Power of the Fire and Light, whose Name is called, VIRGIN SOPHIA.” *Election* 3:42-43

This Tincture is the Power of the speaking in the Word, and the Being or Substance is his in drawing or Compression, where the Word becomes *substantial*: that Substance is the Spirit-Water, concerning which Christ says, *He will give it us to drink, which will flow forth into a Well-Spring of Eternal Life.* 3:61

Tincture is an alchemical concept. There are two tinctures: of the fire (male) and the light (female, water). The two are united in perfect love. Allusion to the chemical wedding and to Limbus/Matrix.

The Tincture is holy; there is no “false tincture” or “tincture of the serpent,” etc.

The tincture is Venus, the fifth property of nature.

Trinity The Holy Scripture shows us that this only God is threefold, viz. one only threefold essence, having three manners of workings, and yet is but one only essence, as may be seen in the outflow power and virtue which is in all things, if any do but observe it: but it is especially represented to us in fire, light, and air; which are three several sorts of workings, and yet but in one only ground and substance.

And as we see that fire, light, and air, arise from a candle (though the candle is none of the three, but a cause of them), so likewise the eternal Unity is the cause and ground of the eternal Trinity, which manifests itself from the Unity, and brings forth itself, First, in desire, or will; Secondly, pleasure, or delight; Thirdly, proceeding, or outgoing. Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

The desire, or will is the Father; that is, the stirring or manifestation of the Unity, whereby the Unity wills or desires itself.

The pleasure, or delight is the Son; and is that which the will wills and desires, viz. his love and pleasure, as may be seen at the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ, when the Father witnessed, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

The delight is the compressure in the will, whereby the will in the Unity brings itself a place and working, wherewith the will wills and works; and it is the feelingness and virtue of the will.

The will is the Father, that is, the stirring desire; and the delight is the Son, that is, the virtue and the working in the will, with which the will works; and



Three principles emanating from the *Ternarium Sanctum*. Design by Gichtel.

the Holy Ghost is the proceeding will, through the delight of the virtue, that is, a life of the will and of the virtue and delight.

Thus there are three sorts of workings in the eternal Unity, viz. the Unity is the will and desire of itself: the delight is the working substance of the will, and an eternal joy of perceptibility in the will; and the Holy Ghost is the proceeding of the power: the similitude of which may be seen in a plant.

The magnet, viz. the essential desire of nature, that is, the will of the desire of nature, compresses itself into an ens or substance, to become a plant, and in this compression of the desire becomes feeling, that is, working; and in that working the power and virtue arises, wherein the magnetical desire of nature, viz. the outflown will of God, works in a natural way.

In this working perceptibility the magnetical desiring will is elevated and made joyful, and goes forth from the working power and virtue; and hence comes the growing and smell of the plant: and thus we see a representation of the Trinity of God in all growing and living things.

If there were not such a desiring perceptibility, and outgoing operation of the Trinity in the eternal Unity, the Unity were but an eternal stillness, a Nothing; and there would be no nature, nor any color, shape, or figure; likewise there would be nothing in this world; without this threefold working there could be no world at all. *Clavis* 17-26

See *Aurora* chapter 3

Turba is the wrath of God proceeding from the first principle, *ex turba magna*. The first principle is the fiery law. God is called God only in the second principle. God is never angry in himself, does not waver between love and wrath according to what he sees transpiring on earth. God does not change at all. It is we who change and effect change according to the immutable laws of the Eternal Nature. The *wrath of God* is not God getting angry and expressing his emotions through fiery judgments. The wrath of God befalls automatically “according as the *Turba* is enkindled in the Wheel or Orb of the Machine or Clockwork, so that one Property is manifested therein; and then comes the *Plague*,” because “the outward Constellation in the Spirit of the World, in the true Ordinance or Course of the formed outspoken Word is displeased or angry, and *hates* it; for it stands not in the Figure or Condition of Joyfulness in the *great Clockwork* or Machine of Nature. And it very suddenly brings its hateful malignant Beams, *ex Turba Magna*, out of the Great Turba.” *Election* 5:80; 8:147-148

Election 5:75 God loves all his Creatures, and can do nothing else but love; for *he* is the only Love itself.

76. But his Wrath is understood to be in the Eternal and Temporal Nature: In the Eternal in the *Center of Darkness*; viz. in the cold and hot Fire Source; and so also in the Spirit of the World it is understood to be in the fiery Science or Root, or Division and *Distinction* of all Properties.

77. And so now if a City, Country, or Creature, awakens or stirs up that Wrath in the fiery Science or Root *in Spiritu Mundi*, in the Spirit of the World in itself, that is, so that it introduces the Abomination [Fullness or Ripeness of Sin] into the Wrath, then it is like Wood in the Fire, wherein the Wrath becomes active and cooperative, and devours round about, and puts the Life in the Science of the Creature into the highest *Torment*.

78. And then thus says the angry fiery Word in the awakened *Turba*, by the prophetic Spirit *in Turba Magna*, in the Great Turba; *I will call for Misery, Mischief, and Desolation upon a City and Country, and will see my Desire executed in Vengeance and Indignation upon it; that the Wrath may devour their Abominations, till it has quite consumed this wicked People.*

79. For that is even the Joy or Recreation, and strong mighty Force of the *Wrath* in Nature: When Men introduce such Fuel, viz. impious Blasphemy, and other Sins and Filthiness thereinto, those it devours, they are its Food.

80. Especially in such a Case, when the human Science or Root *breaks* itself *off* from the Love of God, and commits Whoredom with the Wrath of Nature, there it *fattens* itself to the full, till the universal Fabric, or Clockwork, introduces itself into a fiery Science or Root; there all Things stand in the *Proba* or Trial; then it kindles itself therein, according as the *Turba* is enkindled in the Wheel or Orb of the Machine or Clockwork, so that one Property is manifested therein; and then comes the *Plague*.

81. And thus it is shed abroad upon that Country, City, and Creature; often in Venom and Poison by the Pestilence, often by *Drought* and Unfruitfulness, often by embittering the Minds of Superiors, the Great Ones, whence *Wars* arise.

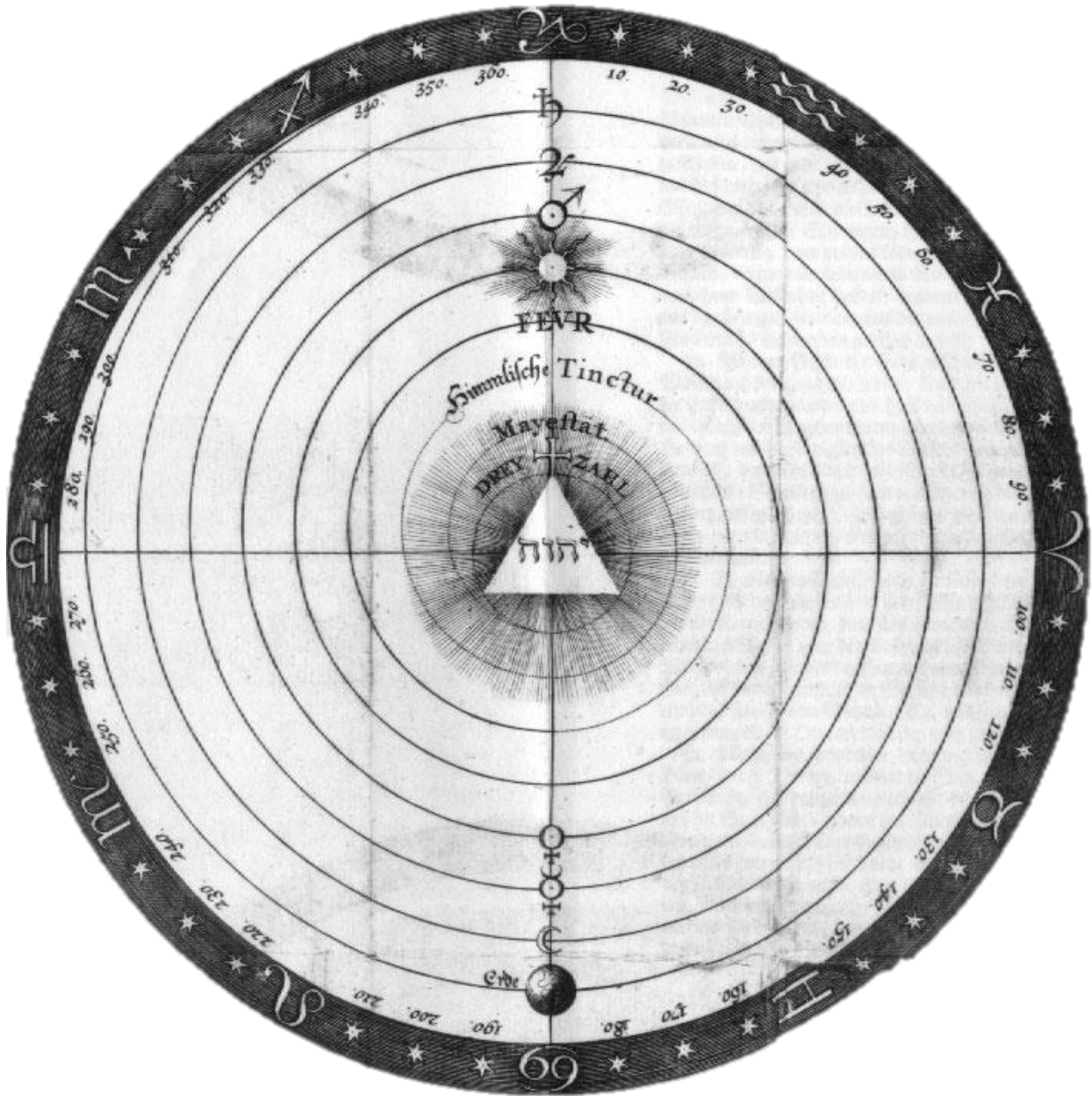
The angry fanatic is one who made a wrong turn in the Hero's Quest and fell into the Turba of God's wrath. The personal testimonies of heresy-hunters and cult leaders are all the same story – how they searched far and wide, wandering from church to church but finding no one who truly knew God, and how they only found God themselves when they “set aside the teachings of men and allowed the Holy Spirit to teach them from the Scriptures” in solitude. They found God, all right, but found him in the wrong principle.

The Hero's Quest leads through dangerous terrain. “How many have fallen there!” (Blake) “The enchanted apples are guarded by dragons.” (George Allen) But we see the way through when we contrast the lonely fanatic's meandering course with Boehme's Way to Paradise: “Your Heart must with all your Power and Strength be directed to Goodness; and as God desires that all Men should be saved, so his Will is that we should help to bear one another's Burden, and bear with one another, and friendly, soberly, and modestly meet one another with Entreaties in the Holy Ghost, and seek with Earnestness the Salvation and Welfare of our Neighbour in Humility, and wish heartily that he might be freed from Vanity, and enter with us into the Garden of Roses.” *Three Principles* 9:15

Ungrund see [Abyss/Byss](#)

Wheel of Nature from *The Threefold Life of Man*, explaining the pairing of planets in each of the seven properties in the *Clavis* diagram p. 38. The planetary pairings – Saturn/Luna, Jupiter/Mercury, Mars/Venus – are linear opposites but consecutive on the spiral. The German words on the inward spiral below Sol are Fire, Heavenly Tincture, Majesty, Number Three. At the center is the Tetragrammaton.

Turning the wheel clockwise and following the spiral, we see the passage of the soul from earth [Erde], through the seven properties, to eternity.



9: 64. First, take the uppermost [planet] and unto it the nethermost, for in the wheel everywhere is uppermost and undermost, understand in *the Wheel of Life*, and it wheels the upper part undermost when it turns round; which is only to be understood concerning fond conceited men, and beasts, with whom the wheel of nature falls a turning; for the Cross stays it. Therefore observe well: *Saturn* ♄ attracts the *Moon*, ☾ which is beneath, and causes in the matrix of the creature the *corporising*, viz. that there be flesh; for *Saturn* and the Moon make *Sulphur* [or corporeity].

65. Now *Saturn* ♄ desires only to shut up, it seizes upon and holds fast; as [in turning] liquor into a *Sulphur*. But *Saturn* has not *sul*; for *sul* is from the liberty, but *Saturn* has a willing, and the will has *sul*, for it originally proceeds out of the Majesty.

66. Consider now, beneath *Saturn* ♄ stands *Jupiter*, ♃ which is proceeded out of the virtue of *Sol* [or the sun] as the heart of *Saturn*, (else there would be no desiring, no *Saturn*); for nature desires only the heart and *Sol* ☉ [or the sun]; yet *Jupiter* is not *Sol*, but *is the brain*.

67. And observe it, the wheel of nature winds itself *from without inwards* into itself; for the Deity dwells innermost in itself, and has such a figure [as is here shown]. Not that it can be delineated; it is only a natural similitude; *Even as God portrays* [represented or reveals] *himself in the figure of this world. For God is everywhere total and perfect, and dwells thus in himself.*

68. *Observe; The outward wheel is the Zodiac, with the constellations, and then the seven planets follow to Sol, after Sol stands Fire, after Fire Tincture, after Tincture Majesty, after Majesty the Number Three, with the Cross.*

69. And observe it, the desiring goes *inwards* into itself towards the Heart, which is God, as you may conceive by such a figure: for the *Regeneration* goes also into itself to the Heart of God.

70. Observe it also well, for it is the centre [or the ground] of the outward birth. In the *eighth* circumference [next] after the *zodiac* is *the globe of the earth*; after that, right against it, about on the wheel is *Saturn*, and going about the wheel, there is the *Moon*, and again about on the wheel is *Jupiter*, and again about on the wheel is *Mercury*, ♿ and about again is *Mars*, ♂ and then *Venus*, ♀ and *Sol* in the *midst*, and after *Sol*, the *Fire* which *Sol* affords, and after the fire the other world, *viz.* the *Heavenly Tincture*, and after the Heavenly Tincture the *Number Three*, *viz.* the eternal Heart, and that is the eternal centre of nature, and in the eternal centre is the whole power of the Majesty of God throughout, held or shut up by nothing, and is of no substance or nature [imaginable], even as the shining of the sun.

Will “Faith is a will.” “Imagination is a will.” “The magia is nothing but a will.” “The will is the Father.” “The will beholds itself in the mirror of Sophia.” *Incarnation* 2:1:1 “We recognise the will as the eternal Omnipotence.” *The Heavenly and Earthly Mystery (Pansophicon)* 3:1

Election 1:53. Here we will intimate to the Reader, that God in himself, so far as he is called God, without and beyond Nature and Creature, has *no more than one* only Will, which is to give forth, and generate himself.

54. God JEHOVAH generates nothing but God, that is, he generates only *himself*, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the one only Divine Power and Wisdom.

55. As the Sun has but one only Will, which is, to give forth itself, and with its Desire in all things to press forth and grow, and to bestow Life, Power, and itself in all things; so in like Manner also is God without Nature and Creature the one only Good, that cannot give or will anything but God or Goodness.

William Law: *“Moses saith, God breathed into man (Spiraculum Vitarum) the breath of lives, and man became a living soul.*

“To say that God breathed forth into man the breath of lives, by which he became a living soul, is directly saying, that that which was life, light, and Spirit in the living God, was breathed forth from him to become the life, light and spirit of a creature. The soul therefore being declared to be an effluence from God, a breath of God, must have the nature and likeness of God

“Thinking and willing are eternal, they never began to be. Nothing can think, or will now, in which there was not will and thought from all eternity... The created soul is a creature of time, and had its beginning on the sixth day of the creation; but the essences of the soul, which were then formed into a creature, and into a state of distinction from God, had been in God from all eternity, or they could not have been breathed forth from God into the form of a living creature.

“And herein lies the true ground and depth of the uncontrollable freedom of our will and thoughts: they must have a self-motion, and self-direction, because they came out of the self-existent God. They are eternal, divine powers, that never began to be, and therefore cannot begin to be in subjection to any thing. That which thinks and wills in the soul, is that very same unbeginning breath which thought and willed in God, before it was breathed into the form of an human soul; and therefore it is, that will and thought cannot be bounded or constrained.

“Herein also appears the high dignity, and never-ceasing perpetuity of our nature. The essences of our souls can never cease to be, because they never began to be: and nothing can live eternally, but that which hath lived from all eternity. The essences of our soul were a breath in God before they became a living soul, they lived in God before they lived in the created soul, and therefore the soul is a partaker of the eternity of God, and can never cease to be. Here, O man, behold the great original, and the high state of thy birth; here let all that is within thee praise thy God, who has brought thee into so high a state of being, who has given thee powers as eternal and boundless as his own attributes, that there might be no end or limits of thy happiness in him. Thou beganst as time began, but as time was in eternity before it became days and years, so thou wast in God before thou wast brought into the creation: and as time is neither a part of eternity, nor broken off from it, yet come out of it; so thou art not a part of God, nor broken off from him, yet born out of him. Thou shouldst only will that which God willeth, only love that which he loveth, cooperate, and unite with him in the whole form of thy life; because all that thou art, all that thou hast, is only a spark of his own life and Spirit derived

into thee. If thou desirest, and turn towards the sun, all the blessings of the Deity will spring up in thee; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, will make their abode with thee. If thou turnest in towards thyself, to live to thyself, to be happy in the workings of an own will, to be rich in the sharpness and acuteness of thy own reason, thou chooseth to be a weed, and canst only have such a life, spirit and blessing from God, as a thistle has from the sun.

An Appeal to All Who Doubt 1:1, 10-12

Wisdom (see Sophia) is personified as a woman by Solomon (Proverbs ch. 8) and by Jesus – “Wisdom is justified by her children,” Matthew 11:19 – showing that wisdom is not an object that we can view and describe; wisdom is a subject that views, describes and acts upon us. Knowledge can be acquired, accumulated and possessed. Wisdom is eternal and uncreated. No one *possesses* wisdom.

He who manages to lose himself
In the operations of Wisdom
Will be possessed by Wisdom
Without even being wise. (Comenius)

Clavis 40. The Holy Scripture says, The wisdom is the breathing of the divine power, a ray and breath of the Almighty; also it says, God has made all things by his wisdom; which we understand as follows.

41. The wisdom is the outflowing Word of the divine power, virtue, knowledge, and holiness; a subject and resemblance image of the infinite and unsearchable Unity; a substance wherein the Holy Ghost works, forms, and models; I mean, he forms and models the divine understanding in the wisdom; for the wisdom is the passive, and the spirit of God is the active, or life in her, as the soul in the body.

42. The wisdom is the great Mystery of the divine nature; for in her the powers, colors, and virtues are made manifest; in her is the variation of the power and virtue, viz. the understanding: she is the divine understanding, that is, the divine vision, wherein the Unity is manifest.

43. She is the true divine chaos, wherein all things lie, viz. a divine imagination, in which the ideas of angels and souls have been seen from eternity, in a divine type and resemblance; yet not then as creatures, but in resemblance, as when a man beholds his face in a glass: therefore the angelical and human idea did flow forth from the wisdom, and was formed into an image, as Moses said, “God created man in his image;” that is, he created the body, and breathed into it the breath of the divine effluence, of divine knowledge, from all the three Principles of the divine manifestation.

Stone-church theology assumes that, because God is unchanging, theology must be static. But our relation to Deity and to the cosmos is ever-changing and our perception is never what it was a minute ago. The instant a theology is formulated, reality moves on and leaves it behind. Theology is a bird in a cage; theosophy is a bird on the wing. Theosophy is the wisdom *of* God and the wisdom *about* God. The two are one. “The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which he sees me.” (Meister Eckhardt) Wisdom is the uncreated beam from the eye of God.

Zodiac the constellations of fixed stars. Boehme expounds on the seven planets throughout his writings but makes scant mention of the Zodiac, and then only when explaining diagrams; *Threefold Life* 9:63 ff. and *Four Tables of Divine Revelation*. He tells us nothing of houses or their properties and influences. He seems to be referring only to the planets when he writes of “the influence of the stars.”